Ædes Christi
in Academiâ Oxoniensi.

E. 470.

by

Dominique Bouhours

Christian Thoughts

For every Day of the

MONTH.

Together with

MEDITATIONS

Upon the most

Important TRUTHS

OF THE

GOSPEL.

Translated from the last Edition of the Original. Enlarged by the Author.

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TO HIS
Ever Honoured AUNT,
Mrs. *S*—— *B*——

MADAM,

I Doubt not, but you will be ſurpriz'd to find your Name prefix'd to the following Treatiſe, not having acquainted you before with my Deſign of either Tranſlating or Publiſhing it: As to the firſt, I could not, being abroad at too great a diſtance; and as to the latter, I thought it a needleſs Ceremony, there appearing ſo great *Analogy* between the Subject of this Book, and

the Piety of your Life and Converſation. Beſides, as I have the Honour to be related to you, I could not but think it my Duty, on ſuch an Occaſion, humbly to beg your *Patronage*; tho, for the ſame Reaſon, I am confin'd from giving the World a further account of your Goodneſs and Vertües. But thoſe, Madam, who have the Happineſs to know you, will [I am certain] approve my Choice of the *Patroneſs*, as you your ſelf will, I hope, the Choice I have made of the Author. I am,

MADAM,
Your moſt Dutiful Nephew,
and humble Servant,
T. B.

THE
Authors Advertiſement
TO THE
READER.

THESE are not Diſcourſes which require either much Application or Time in the Reader; they are ſingle Thoughts, meerly moral, which have for their Object not only natural Honeſty, like thoſe of Epictetus *and* Seneca; *but they are* Chriſtian Thoughts, *which have for their end the moſt Important Truths of Faith, and the moſt ſublime Maxims of the Goſpel.*

Theſe

Advertiſement

Theſe Thoughts are not only proper for thoſe who live retired, and whoſe Buſineſs is Devotion, but likewiſe for thoſe who are engaged in Affairs of the World, and have little or no acquaintance with God; *for certainly they who are moſt employed in worldly Concerns, may ſometimes find a Moment to caſt up their Eyes to Heaven; and though their Affairs are ſo urgent, as not to allow them regular Meditations, yet they may at leaſt once a day entertain a religious Thought before they enter upon their worldly Buſineſs. The Deſign of this little Book is to furniſh you with* Meditations for every Day of the Month: *To make good uſe of them, you muſt obſerve the following Method.*

In the Morning as ſoon as you have prayed to God, *and begg'd his Protection, read the Thoughts*

for

for that Day; but read them leasurely, that you may throughly comprehend them. If you have time enough, consider well the first Article before you proceed to the second, and be not satisfied with understanding the Truths or Maxims that you have read; enter into them, digest them; make right Application of them; and so the like in every other Article. If you have too much Business, content your self with a single reading. Christian Thoughts make the same Impression on the Mind, that a Seal does on Wax; though they enter never so little into it, yet they are sure to leave some Mark behind. If you have not leasure in the Morning to read these Thoughts, nor any other time of the Day, yet read them at Night before you go to bed.

The Practice which immediately follows the Thoughts for the Day, is both

both important and eaſie, and muſt by no means be omitted. An Act of Vertue, and one ſhort Reflection, are ſoon performed.

The Quotations at the end of the Chapters, are a Compendium *of the Day's Meditation in which is contained the force and ſubſtance of it: They are ſhort and eaſie to be learned by Heart; they are touching and ſufficient both to excite, ſuſtain, and nouriſh the Soul for that Day. They are Grains of Eſſence which contain many Vertues in a little room, and work great Effect in a little time.*

When, by this Method of a Chapter every Day, you have gone through the whole, begin and read them again, that you may be ſure to underſtand them perfectly, and reap the neceſſary benefit.

There is always ſomething to diſcover in the Truths of the Goſpel, they

they are inexhauſtible Mines; they are likewiſe ſuch Seeds as will produce no Fruit, unleſs they be deeply rooted in our Hearts.

TO

TO THE

Ingenuous Translator.

TO imitate this Authors pious flame,
And awful Style, muſt challenge equal flame.
For while you copy his Seraphick Mind,
In words as weighty Language more refin'd;
With your's the Nation's praiſe you do advance,
And Britain *once more triumphs over* France.
A work that has a full atonement wrought
For all the numerous Toys by others brought.
This Gem we had before, but ſo diſguis'd
By artleſs Hands the Jewel ſcarce was pris'd.
Poliſh'd by thee, it ſhines in every Page,
To dazle and invite the wondring Age.
Since then thou haſt begun with ſuch ſucceſs,
Proceed till the whole Treaſure we poſſeſs.
For pleaſure ſome, and ſome for profit rome,
He travels beſt, who brings Salvation *home.*

Chriſtian

Christian Thoughts

For every Day of the

MONTH.

The First Day.

Of Faith.

I. WHatsoever the Gospel teacheth us, is grounded upon the Authority of Gods Word; that which is there proposed to us for the Object of our Belief, was received from Christ himself. It is impossible to err, when we have Truth

it ſelf for our Guide. There is nothing more reaſonable than the ſubmitting our Reaſon to Faith.

II. To what end has a Chriſtian Faith, if he makes not uſe of it, as a Rule to his Actions? It is a great madneſs to doubt the Truth of that Doctrine which God has reveal'd, which ſo many *Martyrs* have ſigned with their Blood, which has been confirmed by ſo many Miracles, and which the Devils themſelves have been forc'd to acknowledge. But it is yet a far greater madneſs to believe this Doctrine, and live as one doubted the verity of it; for it is to believe as the Devils do, not to lead a Life conformable to our Faith.

III. Faith, then for the future, ſhall be the ground of my Actions, and Rule of my Life; that which ſhe diſapproves, I will abſolutely condemn, notwithſtanding all the Strug-

Strugglings of Nature. I will make uſe of the Maxims of the Goſpel againſt thoſe of the World. What ſaies the World? It ſaies, We ought to follow our own Inclinations, and ſuffer nothing. What ſaies Jeſus Chriſt? quite the Contrary. Who is in the right of it, Chriſt or the World?

Here thank God that you are born a Member of the true Church. Say the Creed ſlowly, as if you were making a ſolemn Profeſſion of your Faith.

Adauge nobis fidem, Luk. Chap. 17. Lord, encreaſe our Faith.

Quid prodeſt, ſi quis catholicè credat, & gentiliter vivat? Pet. Dam. What avails it to believe like a Chriſtian, and live like a Heathen?

The Second Day.

Of the End of Man.

I. GOD alone is our last End; he could not create us, but for himself. Our Heart tells us, We are made only for God, and we cannot think otherwise, without betraying our selves, and giving our Hearts the Lye.

II. Every one ought to have his own. Let us then yield our selves up to God, since we belong to him. If we submit not our selves willingly to him, as his Children, we shall be compelled to do it, as his Slaves. It is necessary for us to live under the Government, either of his Mercy, or Justice: which side will you chuse?

III. Every thing should tend to its Center, and act according to its Nature. If the Sun which was made to give us Light, should with-hold his Beams, it would be

as

as if it were not at all, or rather it would ſeem a Monſter in the World; ſo there is nothing more unprofitable or monſtrous, than a Heart that was made only for God, not to be only his. Do I carry my ſelf like a Creature that is only made for God? My Thoughts and Actions, are they all for him? Alas, how few things do we, which we can truly ſay are for Gods Service! What do we on Earth, if we neglect the only thing for which we were ſent into the World?

Take here a firm Reſolution to ſeek only after God, and to rob him of nothing that appertains to him.

Dominus meus & Deus meus.
My Lord, and my God. *John* 20.
Totum te exigit, qui totum te fecit.
St. *Auguſt.*
He that has made you what you are, may juſtly require of you to be only his.

The Third Day.

Of Contempt of the World.

I. NO ſooner does a Man fix his Heart on the World, but he ceaſes, in ſome manner, to be a Chriſtian. This profane World is ſo enamour'd with Greatneſs, with Pleaſure, and whatever elſe ſooths its ſenſual inclinations, that it thereby becomes the capital Enemy of Jeſus Chriſt: their Maxims, their Commands, and their Intereſts, are contrary to each other. We cannot ſerve two Maſters, we muſt break with the one, or the other.

II. We cannot take the worldly part without violating the Promiſes of our Baptiſm, wherein we are engag'd by a ſolemn Oath to forſake the Devil and all his Works, to trample under feet all the Pomp and Vanities of this wicked World. What Perfidiouſneſs,

neſs, what Sacrilege, after all this, to become an Idolater of Vanity, and to prefer the Goods of the Earth, before thoſe of Heaven?

III. The World has nothing worth the Love of an immortal Soul.

It has not wherewith to recompenſe its Followers; its Treaſures, its Divertiſments, its Honour may for ſome time amuſe a Man's Heart, but they can never ſatisfie it. They are (to ſpeak truly) but falſe Good's, Illuſion, and meer Shadows; or rather, they are true Evils: They make a Man wicked, without making him happy.

The moſt dazling Fortune is not only vain and frail, but burthenſome, abounding with Bitterneſs and Chagrin; we ſigh and complain. The King on his Throne has his Sufferings as well as the Slave in his Irons.

Beſeech God to deſtroy in you the Spirit of the World, and enable you to deſpiſe its Greatneſs.

Præterit figura hujus mundi.
The World paſſes away, and the Figure thereof. 1 *Cor.* 7.

Væ his qui hæſerint tranſeuntibus, quoniam ſimul tranſeunt.
They are unhappy who fix their Minds on tranſient things, becauſe they themſelves paſs away together with them.

The Fourth Day.

Of Death.

I. A Chriſtian hath great reaſon to fear Death, when he lives not like a Chriſtian. What Reckoning is to come after a worldly and ſenſual Life? what Regret

Regret for having loſt the opportunities of our Salvation? to die the Enemy of God? O the ſad Death! O the deplorable Moment which is to end the pleaſures of this Life, and to begin the Pains of Eternity!

II. What ſhall we not wiſh to have done at the Hour of Death? Let us do now, what we ſhall then deſire to have done; there is no Time to loſe. Every Moment may be our laſt; the longer we live, the nearer we are to the Grave: Our Death is ſo much the nearer, the longer it has been deferr'd.

III. What Thoughts ſhall we have of the Goods of the Earth, when we are to leave them? Let us now take Counſel of Death, he is faithful, and will not deceive us. What will become of this Wealth, this Pleaſure, this Beauty? how will they be eſteem-

ed by the Dying? During our Life, we are cheated with Appearances; but at Death we see all Things as they are. The living Man values the World, but the dying despises it; which of the two ought we to believe? Oh, how little will the World appear by the glimmering of that Taper that lights us on our Death-bed? but then, alas, it will be too late to be undeceiv'd.

Think of that which you would most fear, if you were presently to die; and set all things in order thereunto. Accustom your self to do the Duty of each Day, as if it were to be your last; and confirm your self in this Practice by frequent receiving of the holy Communion.

Uno tantum gradu ego morſque dividimur.

I am within one ſtep of Death, 1 *King.*

Chriſtiano craſtinum non eſt. Tertul.

There is no To-morrow for a Chriſtian.

The Fifth Day.

Of the laſt Judgment.

I. WE muſt one Day appear before the Tribunal of Jeſus Chriſt, to receive Judgment according to the Good or Ill that we have done. There is nothing more expreſs, or fully ſet down in the Scripture than this Truth. I believe it as firmly, as if the laſt Trumpet were now ſounding to awaken all the Dead.

II. What

II. What ſhall we ſay when we find ſo many evil Thoughts, ſo many guilty Actions, and ſo many neglected Opportunities of Grace, riſe in Judgment againſt us.

II. O the terrible Day, the Day of God's Wrath, when all things ſhall be laid open, even to the inmoſt Motions of our Hearts; when every thing ſhall be ſtrictly reckoned for, even to a Moment, and nothing abated! The Juſt ſhall ſcarcely be quitted, where then ſhall the wicked and ungodly appear?

III. What Sentence is an Impenitent Sinner to expect from an inexorable God? O the dreadful Decree of, *Go you Curſed*, &c! Ah, Lord where ſhall thoſe Wretches go, who lie under your Curſe? into what Corner of the World will you have them retire, who muſt part from you? where can that Habitation be? to be

ba-

baniſhed from the Preſence of God, and to be curſed by him; what a Portion is that?

Imagine your ſelf to be before the Tribunal of God; of what Sin is it that you would be moſt aſham'd? think of it in time, and remember that the moſt ſecret Sins will be made publick at the Day of Judgment, unleſs they are before waſhed away by Repentance.

Ante faciem indignationis ejus quis ſtabit? Nah. 1.

Who can ſtand before his Indignation?

Væ etiam laudabili vitæ hominum, ſi remotâ miſericordiâ diſcutias eam. St. Aug.

Wo to the moſt regular and blameleſs Life, if thou, O Lord, examine it without Mercy.

The

The Sixth Day.

Of Hell.

I. WHat Horror ſhould we have of Hell, if we could but hear the lamentable Cries of the damn'd. They ſigh, they groan, they howl like wild Beaſts in the midſt of the Flames. They reproach one another with their Sins; they lament them, they deteſt them, but all too late. Their Tears ſerve only to encreaſe the Fire that burns them, without conſuming. O Repentance of the damn'd, how rigorous art thou to no Purpoſe!

II. Never to ſee God, nor to be where he is; to burn eternally in that Fire, of which ours is but a Shadow; to ſuffer all ſorts of Miſery, without Relief or Intermiſſion; to have always the Devil before our Eyes, Rage and Deſpair continually in our Hearts; O what a Life is this!

III.

III. These Wretches rage to think of the many Opportunities they have had of Salvation, and how they have neglected them all. The Remembrance of their past Pleasures, is one of their most sensible Torments; but nothing so much afflicts them, as not to be able to forget that God, whom they have lost by their own Fault.

Fancy your self to be in Hell; ask the damn'd what brought them thither; interrogate them of the Estate in which they are, and learn of them to fear God, and see your own Danger.

Quis de vobis habitare poterit cum igne devorante?

Who can dwell with everlasting Fire? *Isaiah* 33.

De pœnâ in pœnam transeunt, de ardore cupiditatis in ardorem Gehennæ. St. August.

The

The wicked pass from one Torment to another, from the Flames of Lust into those of Hell.

The Seventh Day.

Of the Eternity of Hell's *Torments.*

I. CAN the Wrath of God go further than to punish the Pleasures that endure so little with Torments that never end? to be wretched as long as God shall be God; what misfortune is that? is it not enough, that the Pains of the damn'd should be extream? must they be everlasting? The prick of a Pin, which is but a light hurt, were it always to continue, would become insupportable; what then shall it be, *&c.*?

II.

II. O Eternity! when a damn'd perſon ſhall have ſhed as many Tears as are ſufficient to make up all the Rivers and Seas in the World, he would be never the nearer after ſo many Millions of years than if he did but juſt begin to ſuffer. He muſt begin anew; and when he has begun and begun as often as there are grains of Sand on the Sea-ſhore, or Atoms in the Air, and Leaves in the Foreſts, all this ſhall be accounted for nothing.

III. The damn'd have not only an Eternity to ſuffer, but they ſuffer that whole Eternity in every Moment. Eternity is always before them; Eternity enters into all their Pains, they have always in their Mind, that thoſe Pains will never end. O the cruel Thoughts! O the deplorable Eſtate! an Eternity to burn, an Eternity to weep, an Eternity to rage. O did we but conceive of this as the damned do!

Make

Make it part of your Creed, the duration of Pains, with which the Divine Justice punisheth Sin. We must believe it, though we cannot conceive it. It is a great Misfortune for a Christian not to be convinced of the reality of Eternal Torments, but by his own Experience.

Qui non obediunt Evangelio, pœnas dabunt in interitu sempiternas. Taking Vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction. 2 *Thess.* 1.

Momentaneum est quod delectat, æternum quod cruciat. St Chrysost. The Pleasure of Sin is for a Moment, the Punishment Eternal.

The

The Eighth Day.

Of Paradiſe.

I. PAradiſe, O the great word! who names Paradiſe, names the Privation of all Evil, the Aſſemblance of all that is Good, the Maſter-piece of God's Magnificence, the Price of Chriſt's Blood, the fulfilling of our Hearts Deſires, and ſomewhat more than all this.

II. To ſee God in the full Splendor of his Glory, to love him beyond all meaſure, to poſſeſs him without Fear of ever loſing him, to participate of his Happineſs; this, this is the Object of our Hopes. Ah! I have but a few Days of Exile and Pilgrimage on Earth; after which I ſhall be for ever with him, whom my Soul loves.

III. What matters it how, or what we are here, ſo we may be eter-

eternally with Christ hereafter? Can I justly complain that an infinite Bliss costs me a little Trouble? The Martyrs bought Heaven with the Price of their Blood; yet after all, they thought it was given them for nothing. O blessed Eternity, if Men did but know thy true Value!

Excite in your self an ardent Desire to see God, and look upon the Earth with Contempt, in respect of Heaven. If you were once possest with a true Knowledge of Paradise, you would neither admire, nor fear any thing in this World.

Satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua. Psal. 16.

I shall be satisfied with the fulness of thy Glory.

Si labor terret, merces invitet. S. Bern.

If the Duty terrifies us, the Reward ought to encourage us.

The

The Ninth Day.

Of God's Preſence.

I. GOD conſiders me as if I were alone in the World, or rather, he is in me like an All-ſeeing Eye, from which nothing can be hid; he views me after the ſame manner that he ſurveys himſelf, and ſo intenſely, as if he ceaſed from contemplating his own Eſſence, to ſtudy me, and know me to the bottom.

II. It is a thouſand times more diſgraceful for me to have my Sins known to God, than if they were expoſed to the view of the whole World. Would you do that before the meaneſt of your Servants, which you preſume daily to commit in the preſence of the King of Kings? what blindneſs, what Folly is it to fear ſo much the Eyes of the world, and ſo little thoſe of God?

III.

III. All the darkneſs of Night is not thick enough to hide us from him that is Light its ſelf. The moſt retired and ſolitary places are full of his Divine Majeſty. In vain we ſhun the ſight of Men, ſince we every where meet with that of God.

Place your ſelf with Reverence before God, and ſee if there be any thing in you that is diſpleaſing to him. Accuſtom your ſelf to the Practice of his Preſence, for it is a ſure and effectual Remedy againſt Sin. If we do but conſider that God ſees us, it is ſufficient to check in us our ſinful Deſires.

Omnia nuda & aperta ſunt oculis ejus. All things are naked and open to his ſight. *Heb.* 4.

Si peccare vis, quære ubi non te videat Deus, & fac quod vis. S. Aug.

If

if you muſt needs commit Sin, find ſome place where God cannot ſee you, and do what you will.

The Tenth Day.

Of the Care of our Salvation.

I. SAlvation is Man's chiefeſt Buſineſs, all the reſt ought to be looked upon as nothing.

The Undertakings of Princes, the Intrigues of Courts, Wars, Negotiations, *&c.* are but as ſo many Amuſements and Toys for Children; our moſt important and only Affair is to ſerve God, and ſave our Souls. In this conſiſts Man's chiefeſt Good, his Perfection and Happineſs. It is more irrational than Man like, to neglect a Concern of ſo great Conſequence, whoſe Succeſs is uncertain, and Loſs irrepairable. What Blind-

Blindneſs and Folly is it to be thoughtful how to live, and take no care how to live well? to be ſo ſollicitous to make our Fortune, and ſo careleſs of our Salvation! *What does it profit a Man to gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul?*

II. All Creatures were created for our Salvation, and they become unprofitable when they are not made uſe of to that end; ſo that when a Man ceaſeth to work out his Salvation, the Sun ought to refuſe him his Light, and the Heavens to ſtand ſtill, the Earth to deny him her Fruits, and the Angels their Protection; or rather, he ought to return into nothing, for he is unworthy of Life, when he lives not for God.

III. Nevertheleſs the greateſt part of Mankind think of nothing ſo little as the ſaving their Souls; great Care is taken of every thing but

but Salvation; we would have all things elſe turn to account: our Money muſt be put out to Intereſt, our Fields plowed, and our Rents raiſed; we lament all Loſſes, but that which is irrepairable: we ſpend much on our Bodies, and nothing on our Souls. By our manner of life, we would think our Souls were no part of us, or that they did belong to our greateſt Enemies, or were no more than Souls of Beaſts; or it rather ſeems that we have none at all; or if we have, to no other purpoſe, but to loſe them.

Make a firm Reſolution to ſave your ſelf at any price, and be of St. Bennet's *mind, who, being asked by a King an unjuſt Requeſt, ſaid,* If I had two Souls, I would give one for this price; but having but one, I will not loſe it.

Porro unum neceſſarium.

There is one thing neceſſary *Luke* 10.

Ubi ſalutis damnum eſt, illic utiqu jam lucrum nullum eſt, S. Eucher Where a Soul is loſt, there can b no Gain.

The Eleventh Day.

Of the Horror of Sin.

I. O What a Loſs is the Loſs of God! Men think themſelves unhappy, when they loſe an Eſtate by a Sute at Law, by a Bankrupt Perſon, or any other Accident; what is then the Loſs of an infinite God? miſerable is that Soul, which loſeth God for a Sin; but more miſerable is that Soul, who counts the Loſs of God as nothing.

II.

II. O Sin! how common art thou amongſt Men, and yet how little known to them? by Gaming, and other Divertiſements, to become the Objects of God's Wrath, what Profit, what Diverſion is that? God who is all Love, hates infinitely a Sinner. To hate a little, is to wiſh a little ill: to hate to death, is to deſire ones Death; but to hate infinitely, is not to be comprehended. What can we then be afraid of, if we apprehend not this dreadful Hatred of God Almighty?

III. Is there ſo dreadful a Spectacle as that of Mount Calvary? yet the State of a Soul deprived of Grace, is much more terrible than that of God's dying on the Croſs. Chriſt died to deſtroy Sin; Sin was to him more horrible than Death.

Conceive a true Sorrow for your Sins. We are to lament no Loſs, but that of Grace; becauſe that only can be repay'd by our Tears.

Quem fructum habuiſtis in illis in quibus nunc erubeſcitis? Rom. 6. What fruit had ye then in thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?

Væ animæ audaci, quæ ſperavit, ſi à te receſſerit, te aliquid melius habituram! St. Aug. Wo to that audacious Soul, which departing from God, hopes to find any thing better.

The Twelfth Day.

Of Repentance.

I. REpent and believe the Goſpel, ſaies our Saviour. He joyns

joyns theſe two things together on purpoſe to learn us, that the Rigors of Repentance are unſeparable from the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. He was, during the Courſe of his mortal Life, a penitent God, altogether imploy'd in expiating our Sins, and appeaſing the Juſtice of his Father; we ought, after his Example, to be penitent Men. If the Saint of Saints hath faſted, wept, *&c.* what ought not Criminals and wicked Men to do?

II. Sin muſt of neceſſity be puniſhed either by him who has committed it, or by him againſt whom it was committed. If Sinners do not in due time chaſtiſe themſelves, the Divine Juſtice will chaſtiſe them eternally. Thoſe Crimes which are not waſhed away with Tears of Repentance, ſhall be puniſhed with the Flames of Hell. Is it not better to weep

for ſome Days, than to burn everlaſtingly?

III. Is it not ſufficient for our Reconcilement to God, to proſtrate our ſelves at the Feet of the Prieſts, to cover our Heads with Aſhes, and our Bodies with Sackcloth? if you have not a true ſenſe of your Sins, if you renounce not with all your Heart your diſordinate Affections, unjuſt Gains, *&c.* you are an Impoſter, and no Penitent. Prayers, Charity, Sufferings, and the mortifying our Fleſh, are but the out-ſides of a Chriſtian Repentance: The hatred of Sin is the Eſſence and Spirit of it.

Ask Pardon of God for having hitherto led a Life ſo oppoſite to the Rule of the Goſpel, and at the ſame time beg Grace of him to live for the Future as the Primitive Chriſtians did, in the

the auſtere Practices of Repentance.

Niſi pœnitentiam egeritis, omnes ſimiliter peribitis; Luc. 13.
Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.

Pœnitentibus dico; quid prodeſt, quia humiliamini, niſi non mutemini? St. Auguſt.
I ſpeak to the Penitent; what avails it that you are humbled, if you are not changed?

The Thirteenth Day.

Of not deferring our Converſion.

I. I Am too long in giving up my ſelf to God, it looks as if I had a deſire to get out of his hands. Is there then any harm in belonging to him? is it a Shame to forſake a ſhameful Life? can

we love too ſoon a Beauty infinitely amiable? To morrow, to morrow; why not to day? why not immediately? To morrow will my Bonds be eaſier to be broken? will my Heart be leſs hard? no certainly: Time, which weakens all things, ſtrengthens evil Cuſtoms. By deferring Remedies, w render our Diſeaſes incurable.

II. What is it that hinders us from following the Voice that calls us to Repentance? what is it that frightens us? It is difficult to change an old courſe of Life: I agree to it. But what ought not a Chriſtian to do, who adores a crucified God, and hopes for Paradiſe? If there be any thing that we ought to fear, it is the Abuſe we make of God's Grace.

III. What! do we defer? Is the time to come in our Power? are we Maſters of it? does God expect me? it is true, the Scripture

pture ſaies ſo, but tells me not how long I have yet to live. He that has promiſed a Pardon to thoſe that repent, has promiſed them no To morrow to repent in. Perhaps I ſhall have time, but perhaps I ſhall have none at all. Is he not certainly a Madman, who grounds his Salvation upon a *Perhaps*?

Reflect on the time you have already ſpent without giving your ſelf up to God, and tremble at the Danger you are in.

Dixi, nunc cæpi, Pſal. 119.

I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.

Nulla ſatis magna ſecuritas, ubi periclitatur æternitas, St. Greg.

We cannot be ſecure, whilſt we are uncertain of Eternity.

The Fourteenth Day.

Of the Cenſures of the World.

I. THE World talks, let it talk on; ſhall the Diſcourſes of Fools hinder you from being wiſe? But what will they ſay? That you fear God more than Man. The greateſt Libertines will in their Hearts have a value for you, and ſay to themſelves that you are in the Right. What matters it after all, what is ſaid of you, ſo you do your Duty, and God is ſatisfied?

II. What Baſeneſs is it to be aſham'd of the Goſpel? Man thinks himſelf honoured to wear the Livery of his Prince, and yet he is aſhamed to wear that of Jeſus Chriſt. The meaneſt Artiſans in the World make an open Profeſſion of their Trade, and Chriſtians

ſtians in the Church dare not appear as Chriſtians. He that denies Jeſus Chriſt here on Earth, him will the Son of God diſown before his Father in Heaven.

III. Ah! Is there any thing in Jeſus, of which we are aſham'd? his Name, is it infamous? is it a diſgrace to follow his Precepts and Examples? you are not aſhamed of being obſcene and blaſphemous, you take Glory in it, and yet you are aſham'd to be a good Man. Nevertheleſs, whatſoever the Opinion of the VVorld be, he is certainly the beſt Man, who ſerves God the moſt faithfully, and makes it his Profeſſion ſo to do.

Ask your ſelf, if the Opinion of the World does not influence your Actions, and hinder you from diſcharging thoſe Obligations which Chriſtianity lays on you.

Non erubeſco Evangelium, Rom. 1.
I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt.

Quid times fronti tuæ, quam ſigno crucis armaſti, St. Aug.
He ought to fear nothing, who carries the ſign of the Croſs on his Forehead.

The Fifteenth Day.

Of Diſtruſt in our ſelves.

I. MAN has nothing to fear ſo much as himſelf: He ought to be more apprehenſive of his own weakneſs, than all the Powers of Hell. A reſolute Word, a penitent Sigh, or a diſdainful Look, are ſufficient to vanquiſh them. *Adam* ſinned, *Solomon* forgot God, St. *Peter* denyed *Jeſus Chriſt*; what will become of us poor Reeds, if the leaſt wind overthrows the Cedars? II.

II. Man is for the moſt part overcome without being attacked. Our Paſſions and Senſes conſpire againſt us every Moment. Thoſe who had withſtood the ſevereſt Perſecutions, who had conquered the power of Tyrants and Enchantments of the Devils, fell by their own Luſt in the Deſart. Beware of your Appetites which ſeem ſubdued and quiet, leſt like a tamed Lion, they return to their native fierceneſs.

III. The greateſt Saints trembled when they thought on the State of their Souls before God. *Anchorites* and Penitents have been heard to ſigh at the Hour of Death, in Apprehenſion of the formidable Decrees of the Divine Juſtice, not knowing how their Condition ſtood, or what would become of them: There needs but one Moment to make a Reprobate of a Saint.

Say

Say with Philip Neri, *Lord watch over me daily, for I ſhall betray you, if you leave me to my ſelf. Foreſee the occaſions that lead to Sin, and remember that thoſe are the moſt dangerous, from which we think there is nothing to be fear'd.*

Qui ſe exiſtimat ſtare, videat ne cadat, 1 Cor. 10.

Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.

Quamvis ſis in tuto, noli eſſe ſecurus, *St.* Bern.

Though you ſeem to be in ſafety, yet preſume not to be too ſecure.

The Sixteenth Day.

Of the uſe of Grace.

I. WE have not the leaſt Grace, but what Chriſt pur-

purchaſed for us at the price of his Blood, and begg'd of his Father when he yielded up his Soul on the Croſs. To neglect a good Thought, which deſcends to us from Heaven, to ſtifle an Inſpiration which conducts us to our Good, is to trample under our feet the Blood of Jeſus, and to render the Merits of his Death unprofitable.

II. We are accountable to God, not only for the Graces we have received, but for thoſe he intended us, if we our ſelves had not obſtructed them. If the Sun ſhines, and we ſhut it out, yet we are not leſs oblig'd to him for his Light, ſince it was in our power to have made uſe of it.

III. It is now perhaps full twenty years and more, that God has inſpired you with good Thoughts, which you have not yet had Reſolutions to put in practice. To be ſo long in the School of the Holy Ghoſt,

Ghoſt, and to learn nothing! to be ſo often ſollicited, entreated, nay, at laſt threaten'd, without performing any thing! Ah! let us remember that God is a Creator, with whom there is no compounding; and if he does not oblige us to immediate Payment, he will at the long run require the whole with large Intereſt; and that in fine he allows us but a certain time for Grace and Sin, after which he withdraws his Grace, and puniſheth the Sinner.

Give thanks to the Holy Ghoſt for all the Graces he has beſtowed upon you, and ask pardon for not having made uſe of them. Hearken to what he now ſuggeſts to you, and be afraid, leſt by a ſpeedy Compliance to his Commands, he does not utterly forſake you.

Cui

Cui multum datum eſt, multum quæretur ab eo, Luc. 12.
Unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall much be required.
Gratiam ſequitur judicium, *St.* Baſil.
When Grace is deſpis'd, Judgment muſt follow.

The Seventeenth Day.

Of the Uſe of Time.

I. THE Loſs of Time is one of the greateſt Irregularities in the World; our Life is ſo ſhort, that every moment of it is precious: yet we live as if there were no end to this Life, or as if we had nothing to do in it.

II. Ah! if a damn'd Soul had but one Minute of the Time that we loſe, what uſe would he make of it? In every moment of my life, it is in my power to gain a happy Eternity.

Eternity. We let ſlip no occaſion of Pleaſure or Profit, and yet we hourly loſe the opportunities of our Salvation.

III. That Day is not the better employed in which we have moſt advanc'd our worldly Affairs, but that wherein we have moſt improved the Grace of God, and pleas'd him moſt. Order ſo your Actions, that whenever you are asked what you are about, you may truly anſwer, I am doing the Service of God, and working out my own Salvation.

Renew your Reſolutions to ſerve God, and take it for granted, that all the time you imploy not in his Service, is utterly loſt.

Nemini dedit ſpatium peccandi, Eccleſ. 15.

He hath commanded no man to do wickedly, neither hath he given

given any man Licence to ſin. *Vacat tibi ut Philoſophus ſis, non vacat ut Chriſtianus ſis, St.* Panha. You may be a Philoſopher at leiſure, but not a Chriſtian.

The Eighteenth Day.

Of the Uſe of the Sacraments.

I. THE Sacraments are the Channels by which the Blood and Merits of Chriſt are conveyed to us: They are the Fountains of Grace, moſt neceſſary to Salvation. When we make ill uſe of them, we render the Merits of Chriſt unprofitable, and our Salvation impoſſible.

II. Our approaching the Holy Table, without due Preparation, is making an ill uſe of the Sacrament, and fruſtrating the good effects

effects of it. What care ought we to take? ſo many Confeſſions, and ſo little amendment! to eat ſo often a heavenly Food, and lead a ſenſual Life! The Chriſtian who has once worthily communicated, has ſtrength enough to ſuſtain a Martyrdom: where are you then, *&c.*

III. That which ought to make us tremble, is, that when we receive the Body of our Lord, without a true Contrition for our Sins, we eat our own Damnation, according to the words of St. *Paul.* Oh! what will become of us, when we muſt make Reparation for the Blood of Jeſus, ſo often profan'd in unworthy and ſacrilegious Receivings?

Conſider the Defect of your Confeſſions and Receivings, and follow the Example of that truly pious Soul, which never approached the Sa-

Sacrament, but in ſuch a Diſpoſition, as if it were immediately to die.

Probet ſeipſum homo, 1 Cor. 11.
But let a man examine himſelf, *&c.*

Sunt Chriſtiani mali qui vocantur fideles, & non ſunt, in quibus Sacramenta Chriſti patiuntur injuriam, St. Aug.
They are Chriſtians who are only ſo in name, and not in effect. Theſe are thoſe who diſhonour and profane the Sacraments of Jeſus Chriſt.

The Nineteenth Day.

Of the Lords Supper in particular.

I. OUR receiving the Lord's Supper, is a Remembrance of Chriſt's Death on the Croſs.

Croſs. We cannot pleaſe God better, than by going often to his Table to perform this Duty like true Chriſtians; we ought to joyn in Devotion with the Miniſter, or rather unite our Hearts with Chriſt himſelf in this great Oblation to God.

II. We offend God every moment, and our Sins deſerve no leſs than eternal Puniſhment. How can we poſſibly make ſatisfaction for them, ſince all the Mortifications of Repentance, all the Sufferings of the Martyrs, and all the Afflictions of the miſerable, can never be able to acquit us of the leaſt of our Debts to God, without often receiving the bleſſed Communion, and applying to us the Merits of Jeſus Chriſt?

III. God would not ſuffer ſuch Wickedneſs in the World, were it not in ſome manner aton'd by a frequent Commemoration of the Death

Death of our Lord and Saviour. The Arm of Divine Juſtice is ſuſpended by this holy Victim: Our Sins cry aloud for Vengeance, but this Sacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt calls aloud for Mercy. Let us adore then the Son of God in a devout Commemoration of his Death, and a frequent attendance on his Altar. What a ſhame is it for us to ſee the Courts of Princes ſo crowded, and the Houſe of God ſo empty?

Make a firm Reſolution of often receiving the Sacrament, and with Reverence ſuitable to ſo great a Duty. Approach the Table of the Holy Communion with the ſame concern, as if you were going to behold the Death of our Saviour upon Mount Calvary.

In

In omni loco ſacrificatur, & offertur nomine meo oblatio munda, Malach. 1.

In every place incenſe ſhall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering.

Tunc vere pro nobis hoſtia erit Deo, cum noſmet ipſos hoſtiam fecerimus, St. Greg.

Nothing can be more truly acceptable, than our often remembring the Sacrifice of Chriſt's Death, when, together with it, we offer up our ſelves to God.

The Twentieth Day.

Of Charity.

I. O How infinitely are we obliged to Jeſus for having given us an occaſion to do him good, in ſubſtituting the Poor in his place! He is in the Sacrament to

to receive our Adorations, and give nouriſhment to our Souls. He is in the Poor to draw our Compaſſion, and be nouriſhed by the Faithful. Happy is the Man who gives Alms to Jeſus Chriſt, but miſerable is the Wretch that refuſeth them to him. You feed your Dog with your own Hands, and let Chriſt periſh with Hunger. Oh, the Injuſtice! Oh, the Barbarity!

II. What we give to great Men, is for the moſt part loſt, but that to God, never: He renders all back with Intereſt, and pays liberally, even to a Glaſs of Water. Gaming, Luxury and Debauchery, have ruin'd many Families, but Charity never impoveriſh'd one. It is an excellent way to grow rich, that of giving to the Poor.

III. Men ſhall be judged at the laſt Day according to their Acts of Charity in this World. What An-

ſwer will the evil Rich Men be able to make, when the Poor ſhall accuſe them of their Hardneſs? when Jeſus Chriſt himſelf ſhall reproach them in theſe terms, *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not*, &c. A Heart that is hard to the Poor, is the Heart of a Reprobate: On the contrary, a Soul truly charitable, is a Soul predeſtinated. What will our Judge have to ſay againſt us, when he ſhall ſee our Clothes upon himſelf, our Bread and Wealth in his Hands? we have nothing to fear at the Tribunal of the Divine Juſtice, if the poor Man does but plead our Cauſe.

Con-

Consider how you use the Poor, if you treat them as the Members of Jesus Christ, if you do them all the good that is in your power.

Fœneratur Domino, qui miseretur pauperibus, Prov. 19.

He that hath pity upon the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord.

Date omnibus, ne cui non dederitis, ipse sit Christus, St. Aug.

Be charitable to all who ask it, for fear you refuse it to Christ himself in person.

The one and twentieth Day.

Of Example.

ILL Example hath damn'd more than good hath saved. If Hell were laid open, so that we might look into it to discourse the damn'd, we should scarce find

one amongſt them, who would not ſay ſuch a he, or ſuch a ſhe has damn'd me. What a ſad reckoning will this be? we are commanded to love our Enemies, why do we then contribute to the Deſtruction of Souls that have never done us any harm? how great reaſon has that Man to doubt of his own Salvation, who has been ſo unhappy as to be inſtrumental in deſtroying the Souls of others that were redeemed by the Blood of God himſelf? What can we hope from Jeſus Chriſt, after having robb'd him of what coſt him ſo dear?

II. Oh, Fathers and Mothers, who live not like Chriſtians, it were better your Children had never been born, or at leaſt not of you! you have given them life only to give them death, and that death, eternal. When at the day of Judgment they ſhall require of your

your Hands their portion of Paradiſe, what Anſwer will you be able to make them?

III. Let us cloath our ſelves with Jeſus Chriſt according to the words of St. *Paul*; let his Spirit, his Conduct, and his Vertues be ſo ſuitable in us, that whoſoever takes notice of our Actions, muſt of neceſſity remember him. A good Life contributes as much to the Edification of our Brethren, as a ſcandalous one to their Damnation.

Take heed of doing any thing, which may prove occaſion of Scandal to your Neighbours; and beg pardon of God for the Sins of others, of which you have been the cauſe. Have we not Crimes enough of our own, without loading our ſelves with other Mens?

Væ homini per quem ſcandalum venit, Matth. 18.

Wo to that Man by whom the offence cometh.

Pro tanto reus, quanto ſecum traxerit in reatum, Salvian.

The wicked are anſwerable for all thoſe they have drawn along with them into Deſtruction.

The two and twentieth Day.

Of Sufferings.

I. WE were not made Members of Chriſt's Church to heap up Riches, and live in Pleaſure: There was no neceſſity of Chriſtianity to introduce this, the World was well practis'd in it before A Chriſtian Life is a crucified Life: we muſt love the Croſs, or renounce the Creed.

II. What ſaies the Goſpel? *Happy are thoſe that weep; but wo to you Rich*, who have your Conſolation in this World! This is the Language of the holy Ghoſt, but in this Age it ſeems a barbarous one, known only at *Canada* and *Japan*, where the Faithful run to Martyrdom. We muſt blot this Article of Sufferings out of the *European* Goſpel. Do we believe that Felicity conſiſts in Tears, and that the Rich are unhappy? yet this is an Article of our Faith; the Belief of which is not leſs neceſſary to our Salvation, than that of the Trinity and Incarnation.

III. It was neceſſary for the Son of God to die on the Croſs, before he could take Poſſeſſion of Glory. None of the Saints could enter Heaven, but by the way of Sufferings. Can we imagine to have that for nothing, which coſt the Son of God and Saints ſo dear?

The Croſs is the Portion and Mark of the Elect; the Soul that neither does, nor will ſuffer any thing, has the Character of a Reprobate ſtamp'd on it: we muſt of neceſſity ſuffer, either in this, or the next World.

Hear Jeſus Chriſt crucified, and beg Grace to participate with him in his Life of Sufferings, that you may partake with him in his Life of Glory.

Qui non bajulat crucem ſuam, non eſt me dignus, Luc. 14.

Whoſoever doth not bear his Croſs, and come after me, cannot be my Diſciple, and is unworthy of me.

Pudeat ſub ſpinato capite membrum fieri delicatum, St. Bern.

What ſhame is it for the Members of Chriſt's Church to live in delicacy, when their *Head* is crown'd with Thorns? The

The three and twentieth Day.

Of Conformity to the Will of God.

I. THE greateſt Happineſs of a rational Creature, is to perform the Will of his Creator. It is in this that true Piety conſiſts. Saints are no otherwiſe Saints, but by having their Wills conformable to Gods: whatever Vertues you have beſides, if you want this, you are not truly devout.

II. The Soul that is diſſatisfied at what God commands, does in ſome manner incroach upon his Authority. To deſire that the things of this World ſhould go otherwiſe than they do, is to wiſh its Government out of God's hands; whatever happens to us, is by his order. Is it not juſt that we conſent to whatſoever infinite Wiſdom ordains?

III. Nothing happens to us by God's Appointment, but what is for our good. Though I ſhould ſee him hold out a Sword, I am ſatisfied that his Hand would be guided by his Heart. What have I then to fear from the Heart that loves me? I will only what he wills. It is in vain to complain of Heat or Cold, Loſſes or Sickneſs, &c. all theſe change their Nature and Name by paſſing through the Hands of God: what the World calls bad times, Afflictions or Diſgrace, if we conſider them as ordain'd by God, are Advantages, good Fortune and heavenly Favours.

Renounce your own Will, and pray that the Will of God may take place.

Ita Pater, &c.

O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this

this Cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Ille placet Deo, cui placet Deus, St. Aug.

It is then that we please God, when his Will is pleasing to us.

The four and twentieth Day.

Of Trust in God.

I. A Man trusts his Health with the Physician, the Writings of his Estate with a Lawyer, and his Life, if he be blind, with a Child, and sometimes with a Dog; and can we make any difficulty of giving up our selves to the Conduct of God?

II. The Divine Providence extends its care, even to the meanest Insects. What can we apprehend who are created after the

the likeneſs of God, and redeem'd by the Blood of Chriſt? God provides for Infidels, who do not acknowledge him, and is good to the wicked, who blaſpheme his Name; what will he then do for Chriſtians, who honour and love him?

III. Our concerns are much better in his Hands than our own: Let's leave our ſelves to him, for he is our Father and Mother. The Tenderneſs he has for his Children, obliges him to have care of them; he has promiſed us his Protection, and will not fail of his Word: Heaven and Earth will ſooner periſh, than the man who puts confidence in God.

Examine your Heart, and ſee if the Truſt it has in God, be worthy of his Bounty, and the Merits of Jeſus Chriſt.

Deus meus es tu, in manibus tuis ſortes meæ, Pſal. 31.

Thou art my God, my times are in thy Hand.

Projice te in eum, non ſe ſubſtrahet ut cadas, St. Aug.

Caſt up your ſelf into the Arms of the Lord, for he will not let you fall.

The five and twentieth Day.

Of the Love of God.

I. GOD ſo loved us, that he gave even his only Son for us: Had he had any thing dearer, he would have beſtowed it on us. Was it not a dear Purchace of our Love to buy it at ſo great a price? A little Kindneſs requires our love, why ſhould we not then love an infinite Bounty? What! becauſe it is infinite, does it ceaſe to be amiable?

II.

II. God commands me to love him; is it a rigorous Command to love a Beauty infinitely amiable? He commands us to love him with all our Hearts; is one little Heart too much for so great a God? but who exacts all, excepts nothing; whatsoever part I give, if I give not the whole, I give nothing.

III. If Eternity could end, the Devils would think Hell no Punishment, so they did obtain the Grace to love God. There is not a damned Soul who would not esteem himself happy, if after innumerable Ages of Torments, he could perform one act of Love. We can now love God if we please, without any Pain or Trouble: Not to love him when we can, is to be worse than the Devils themselves.

Banish all other Affections and make it your Business to love God above all things.

Si

Si charitatem non habuero, nihil sum, 1 Cor. 13.

And though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge; and though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing.

The six and twentieth Day.

Of our Saviours Love towards us.

I. NOthing was bought at a dearer rate than our Souls: the Life of God was the Price of them. We deserved Hell: The Devil and his Tribes called every Day for the Punishment of our Sins: Christ listened to his Heart, and that begg'd Mercy for us; he had Compassion on us, and gave even to the last Drop of his Blood for

our

our Redemption; ſo that if we did not belong to God as our Creator, yet we muſt needs belong to Jeſus Chriſt as our Redeemer; the leaſt we can pay him, is our Acknowledgment for the good he hath done us; if we give him not Life for Life, at leaſt let us render him Love for Love.

II. I give my Dog a Bone that has nothing on it; for this nothing he loves me, fawns on me, and guards me. Chriſt gives me his Grace, his Blood, his Merit, his Treaſure, and I continue inſenſible. Learn, learn ungrateful and unnatural Soul, thy duty of a Beaſt. Thy Dog is thy Inſtructer; if his Example do not reform thee, thou art the greater Brute of the two.

III. We have commonly very tender Hearts for our Friends; we are ſenſible of the good Offices they do us; ſhall Jeſus Chriſt be the

the only person for whom we have ingratitude and hardness of Heart? which of our Friends has been crucified for us?

Beg the love of Jesus Christ, of Jesus Christ himself: we cannot love him without his Grace.

Si quis non amat Dominum Jesum, sit Anathema, 1 Cor. 16.

If a Man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *Anathema Maranatha.*

Si totum me debeo pro me facto, quid addam pro refecto, & refecto hoc modo? St. Bern.

If I owe my self wholly to God for having created me, what is due to him for his having redeem'd me, and that after so excellent a Manner?

The

The seven and twentieth Day.

Of loving our Neighbour.

I. HE that loves not his Neighbour, cannot be truly said to love God. Whatever good Actions we perform, we do nothing, if we love not our Brethren. Martyrdom it self is not acceptable to God, without Charity.

II. *This is my Commandment*, saies our Saviour, *love one another, as I have loved you.* If Man had nothing in him worthy our Love, yet his being beloved of Jesus Christ, is a sufficient Obligation on us to love him with all our Hearts. I should be very delicate not to love what my Saviour has loved more than himself.

III. Do I love all Men, as Jesus Christ has loved me? that is to say, Am I ready to lay down my Life

Life and Fortune for them? How rare is it to find this Devotion amongst Christians, yet it is the true Devotion of Jesus Christ and good Christians?

Excite in your self Sentiments of Tenderness for those whom our Saviour hath so tenderly loved; and make a firm Resolution never to do any thing which may impair your Charity towards your Neighbour.

Qui diligit proximum, legem implevit, Rom. 13.

He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law.

Dilectio sola discernit inter filios Dei & Diaboli, St. Aug.

It is Charity only that distinguisheth the Children of God from those of the Devil.

The eight and twentieth Day.

Of loving our Enemies.

I. CHarity is ſo eſſential to Chriſtianity, that we are obliged to love, even our Enemies. Chriſt has not only commanded us, but ſhow'd us an Example; God enjoyns it, and yet we make a difficulty of obeying. God forgave thoſe Murderers who took away his life; and ſhall not we pardon a little Injury committed by our Brethren?

II. There's no Mercy for the Soul that cannot pardon; God will forgive us, as we forgive others: the revengeful condemns himſelf as often as he ſaies the Lord's Prayer. We muſt love our Enemies, or hate our ſelves.

III. Two Chriſtians that hate each other, ſeem to be of different Re-

Religions; for what likelihood is there, that they who cannot endure one another, ſhould approach the ſame Altar, eat the ſame Divine Food, believe the ſame Heaven, and hope to live together eternally? We are permitted to hate none but the Devils; and it belongs only to the damned to hate one another. There is not a ſurer, or greater ſign of a Reprobate, than that of not-forgiving: The Soul that hath this Character ſtamp'd on it, is mark'd out for Hell.

Examine your Heart in the preſence of Chriſt crucified, and if you find there a hatred for any one, take Thoughts of Charity from the Wounds of Jeſus.

Qui odit fratrem ſuum, homicidia eſt, 1 Johan. 3.

Who-

Whoſoever hateth his Brother, is a Murderer.

Vindicari vis chriſtianus, nondum vindicatus eſt Chriſtus? St. Aug.

Do you ſeek revenge, being a Chriſtian, when the Death of Chriſt is yet unrevenged?

The nine and twentieth Day.

Of the Imitation of our Saviour.

I. THE firſt Man loſt himſelf by attempting to be like God; all the reſt muſt be ſaved by endeavouring to be like the Son of God: He made himſelf our Pattern in making himſelf Man. We ought to reſemble him, he is the firſt of the predeſtinate, and not to be like him, is to be a Reprobate.

II. We ſtudy with great care the Modes and manners of the World, but have not ſo much as reflected on

on the Life of Jeſus Chriſt. Courtiers conform themſelves to their Prince: the very defects of Philoſophers were followed by their Diſciples; yet have we ever thought ſeriouſly of imitating the Vertues of the Son of God? What ſhame is it for us not to have made ſo much as one Step after him? what Diſparagement for him to march before us, and have no body follow him?

III. What ſhall I ſay at the Day of Judgment, when I ſhall be compared with my Model, when they ſhall oppoſe the Life of Jeſus Chriſt to mine, his Humility to my Pride, his Wounds to my Delicacy, his Sweetneſs to my Anger, *&c.* Ah! what a Monſter ſhall I ſeem? a Chriſtian without Chriſtianity! baptiz'd, and a Slave of the Devil! under the Character of the Croſs, and a Partaker of the Fleſh and the World! We muſt then

then renounce our Baptiſm and Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, or lead a life, as near as we can poſſibly, like that of our Saviours. The beſt Definition of Chriſtianity, is an Imitation of Jeſus Chriſt.

See if there be in you any Foot-ſtep of the Son of God, and if, by your manner of Life, you may be counted a Diſciple of Jeſus.

Magiſter, ſequar te quocunque abîeris, Matth. 8.

Maſter, I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt.

Qua cauſa ſum Chriſtianus, ſi Chriſtum non ſequor? St. Bern.

I am in the wrong to call my ſelf a Chriſtian, if I do not imitate Jeſus Chriſt.

The

The thirtieth Day.

Of Zeal in the Service of God.

I. LET us have as much Zeal for God, as he hath for us; let us endeavour our own Salvation with as much Fervency as he does: He never acts beneath his *Majesty*, but when it is to save our Souls: All the Desires of his Heart, all the Cares of his Providence, all the Tenderness of his Mercy terminate there. What Confusion must this raise in a lukewarm Soul?

II. Were God to be judged by the baseness of our Carriage, one would think him not worthy to be served, or that his Rewards were of no value; what Opinion can we have of that Master, whose Servants serve him negligently, and without Affection? We dis-

honour God, and diſparage his Service by every negligent performance of his Will. Wo to the Man that careleſly performs the Work of God!

III. One Action done for God, though never ſo little, is worth more than all thoſe of Heroes and Conquerors. Is our Courage ſo much raiſed on the account of Vanity? what ſhall we do then for Eternity? Alas! the Servants of the Devil ſpare no Pains, they never complain whatſoever they endure, nothing diſheartens them. Is Jeſus Chriſt leſs to be regarded than the Devils? is Paradiſe leſs worth than Hell? Ah, for the future Hell ſhall be my School. To love God as the damn'd hate him, to ſerve God as we ſerve the World and the Devil, is that too much?

Ex-

Examine your Carriage in the Service of God; consider your Actions, and see in what you are most remiss, and endeavour for the future to render your self more worthy the Service of so great a Master.

Spiritu ferventes, Domino servientes, Rom. 12.

Fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.

Quales impetus habebas ad mundum, tales habebas ad artificem mundi, St. Aug.

Love the Creator of the World as much as you do the world.

THat the Fruit of these Meditations may be reaped by every Person in the Practice of a pure life, we thought fit to subjoyn an account of that Purity and Innocence which the Christian Religion exacts of us.

Of the Purity of Manners which the Christian Religion enjoins.

1. THE Christian Religion differs from others in many things, but chiefly in its Morals; because Christianity absolutely condemns all manner of Sin. Paganism (which has reign'd for many Ages) does not only permit, but authorise such Crimes as Nature it self abhors. There have been Idolaters, who, out of a Principle of Piety, have murdered their aged Parents; and it was one point of their Faith, to believe, That their Gods delighted in Human Blood: accordingly they sacrificed

Men in their Worſhip of *Ceres* and *Bacchus*. We muſt add to theſe Practices the Robberies and Adulteries permitted by the Laws of *Plato* and *Lycurgus*. To ſay nothing of the inceſtuous Marriages amongſt the *Perſians*, but what was yet more abominable, the very Ceremonies of their Religion were ſo horrible, as muſt make a ſober Man tremble to think upon them; witneſs thoſe holy Myſteries (as they term'd them) which were performed to *Ceres* and *Bacchus*. Nor can we think it ſtrange, that that Religion which Deified the worſt of Men, ſhould preſcribe nothing but Vice to be practiſed. It was therefore an excellent Saying of St. *Cyrian*; *Deos ſuos quos venerantur, imitantur, fiunt miſeris & delicta religioſa*; They imitate thoſe Gods whom they worſhip, whoſe Crimes become the Object of their Religion.

As

As for Mahumetism, all the World knows that it is impure and brutal Religion that indulges sensual Appetites, and places the Happiness of Man in the Pleasures of Beasts.

But the Christian Religion forbids all manner of vicious Actions, not only in general, but particular; for Christianity (according to St. *Gregory* of *Nice*) being an Imitation of God, whose Will is just, and Justice it self, cannot subsist with the Practice of the least Vice.

II. Our Religion does not only prohibite greater Sins, but even the smallest; laying Restraint upon the least disorderly Action, upon words that make the least Encroachment on modesty or charity, upon the least lascivious Glance of the Eye, or immodest Gesture that may give offence to our Neighbour. Murder was forbidden by the Old Law, but in the New, the least start

of Paſſion, the leaſt reproachful Word, or diſdainful Look, are ſufficient to make us guilty in the ſight of God. What ſhall I ſay? the moſt obliging Words that are not accompanied with Truth; theſe little officious Lyes which have the appearance of Kindneſs, and ſpring from no evil Intention, are yet forbidden to a Chriſtian, becauſe they deviate from Truth, every Lye being contrary to the Law of Nature. Even vain and unprofitable Words are by Chriſtianity held ſinful, although they oppoſe neither Modeſty, Charity, nor Truth; wherefore an Account muſt be rendred of them, becauſe they conduce neither to a rational, nor Chriſtian End. If therefore idle Words will not be permitted, what ſhall we ſay of idle Actions, which have not reſpect to Faith, which is the Rule of a Chriſtian; nor to Reaſon, which ſhould be the Rule of Man. III.

III. Nor does Christianity only condemn such Words or Actions as are criminal, but it also condemns the Desire and Inclination to Sin. Human Laws may well forbid Rapines and Murders, but they cannot forbid the Desire, because the Hearts of Men are not in their Jurisdiction; *Lex manum, non animam prohibet*: This is only the Prerogative of Divine Laws, whose Legislator is Sovereign of the Heart, but amongst Divine Laws themselves. This is particular to Christianity, and distinguisheth it from that of the Synagogue. Our Saviour in his Church has left no Orders for Sacrifices, but instead of the Blood of Bulls and Goats, he requires Innocence of Mind; as *Lactantius* has well expressed it: *In religione christiana pro sacrificio exigitur bona mens, purum pectus.* It is not enough for me to keep my Hands clean, my

Eyes modeſt, and my Mouth chaſt, my Heart muſt likewiſe be pure. If I entertain a looſe deſire at the ſight of a Woman, I am guilty before God, as if I had committed the Crime. It is what our Saviour himſelf has affirmed, *Ego autem dico vobis, quia omnis qui viderit mulierem ad eam concupiſcendum, jam mœchatus eſt eam in corde.* For the better underſtanding this Doctrine of our Saviour, we muſt take notice, that we have an inherent Concupiſcence, the fatal Legacy of our firſt Parents; Divines call it, *fomes peccati*, the Fewel of Sin, always apt to take fire, whereby it enflames the Will, and hurries it into Evil. Our Will being thus enflamed, and overpowered by this Concupiſcence, has two ſeveral Motions; the firſt involuntary and indeliberate, as Divines term it; ſuch are the impulſes from Objects at the firſt ſight,

sight, before our Reason has considered them; the others are voluntary, which arise in the Mind, after due knowledge and reflection. This second sort are justly criminal in us, because we are herein Masters of our selves, and such are those Heart-Adulteries which our Saviour forbids Christians to commit. But although Christianity does not condemn those first Motions, as Sins, yet it condemns them, as Effects of that irregular Concupiscence we spoke of, and enjoyns us to resist them as Seeds and Beginnings of Sin; they are, as it were, young Lions and Tigers too little to harm you as yet, but they are Lions and Tigers still, which if you permit them to grow, will daily become more fierce, till at last they destroy the owner that bred them.

IV. The Purity of the Christian Religion goes yet much farther;

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it

it defends it ſelf againſt the thought of Evil, for fear leaſt that thought ſhould excite a Concupiſcence, which by little and little, may corrupt the Will. It is upon this account that Divines condemn as Sin, the very Thought of an obſcene Object, to which the Mind gives the leaſt conſent: Wherefore we are not permitted to give liberty to our Imaginations of wandring where they pleaſe. Every Chriſtian ſhould ſay with *Job*, *I have made a Covenant with my Eyes, that I will not look upon a Maid*: the Words, *pepigi fœdus*, moſt admirably expreſs that Engagement in our Baptiſm, which, by the Fathers, is called a *Pact* or *Contract*. What does a Chriſtian promiſe in Baptiſm? he makes a Covenant, not only with God and his Church, but likewiſe with himſelf, with his Eyes, with

with his Heart and Spirit, to regard nothing, to covet nothing, to think on nothing that is dishoneſt.

V. Chriſtianity does not only retrench thoſe Seeds or Beginnings of Sin that are within us, but it likewiſe reſtrains us from whatſoever may prove occaſions of it. *If your right Eye offend you, put it out; if your right Hand or Foot offend you, cut them off*, ſaies our Saviour. The Fathers interpret theſe Paſſages of the Occaſions of Sin, which they conceive to be meant by thoſe Words of our Lord. As we part with the moſt noble and uſeful Member (even the Hand or Eye) to preſerve the whole Body, ſo when any Creature becomes to us the occaſion of Sin, we muſt part with it at any rate; *pluck it out, and caſt it from thee*, ſaies our Saviour: He does not

not only say, Pluck out your Eye, but cast it far from you, to shew what distance we should keep from all Occasions of evil and dangerous Inducements to it.

VI. The Christian Religion does not only express great horror against Sin, but it does all that possibly it can to destroy it, both Root and Branch; for which Reason it condemns those earthly Goods that are causes of Sin to us; not for their own sake, but only for the abuse of them. You see here what is meant by those Maxims, Precepts, and Counsels of the Gospel, that enjoyn us to renounce and tread under foot all earthly Goods, Riches, Honours, and Pleasures, though lawful in themselves.

St. *Cyril* informs us, that the *Nazarenes* were not only prohibited the use of Wine, but likewise

wiſe taſting of the Grape, becauſe of their Affinity, ſo that one may be an Inducement to the other; ſo Chriſtianity does not only deſtrain it ſelf from Sin, but from all things that have any tendency thereunto.

VII. In the laſt place, Chriſtianity obliges us, not only to abſtain from actual Sin, but even to flie from the ſmalleſt Shadow of it, according to St. *Paul*, *from all appearance of evil*; to make good our Calling, and become worthy Sons of an unſpotted Church. A Chriſtian ought not to come under Suſpicion of Sin, but ſay to himſelf as a Prince did to *Auguſtus*; *It behoveth us not to ſeem to commit evil; it is ſufficient for private Men, that they do no ill, but for Princes, not to be ſo much as ſuſpected.* So for Chriſtians, who are Heirs of the

the heavenly Kingdom, it is neceſſary that they lead unblameable Lives, without giving the leaſt Occaſion of Cenſure or Suſpicion.

AN

AN ADVERTISEMENT

Concerning the Practice of MENTAL PRAYER.

HE *that is perſwaded that* Mental Prayer *is a difficult Exerciſe, and that all Men are not capable of it, is miſtaken; for meditating, there is no more knowledge required, than to comprehend that we ought to ſeek after what is uſeful to us; that we ought to avoid that which is hurtful; and that what is good deſerves our Love. A Husband-man thinks often on ways how to make his Labour proſper: By his own Reflections he frames to himſelf an Art of cul-*

cultivating the Land, why may not he then be thought capable of thinking ſometimes on the means of his own Salvation, and of reforming his Life by reflecting upon the little Conformity that there is in his Actions with the Law of God, that he hath been taught, and the terrible Judgments wherewith his Diſorders will be puniſhed? If Perſons ſo ſimple and ignorant can meditate uſefully, it is plain, that it is a dangerous Wile of the Devil, to perſwade ſo many People that they are incapable of it. I ſay nothing of thoſe who excuſe themſelves from the Duty of Prayer, upon the account they are otherwiſe too much taken up about Buſineſs: There is ſo little Reaſon for that Excuſe, that I cannot be perſwaded, that they who alledge it, believe in good earneſt that it will paſs with God. The moſt important Buſineſs of life, is to work out ones own Salvation. As to Worldlings, who will not meditate,

ditate, because the use of Meditation insensibly inspires a certain Spirit of Reservedness and Modesty, which suits not with the Spirit of the World; I agree with them, that it is hard long to practise that Divine Exercise, and retain the Spirit of the World; and I am ready to confess, that that's the only end why I would engage them to it. But I beseech them to consider, that since they must one day forsake that Spirit so opposite to the Spirit of Jesus Christ, *if they would be saved, there is no more easie, nor less violent means than that, to mortifie the same.*

Mental Prayer, *according to the Definition that St.* John Damascene *gives of it, is,* An Elevation of the Soul to God. *Of this, there are two sorts; the one Extraordinary, for which no Rules can be given, because it consists in certain Operations of God upon the Soul, which only depend on him: The other Ordinary,*

ry, which is done by the three Faculties of the Soul, assisted by Grace. Holy Men have given several Precepts concerning that, of which I think it will not be improper here to give an Abridgement.

I. *Regulate the time that you will allow for Prayer, according to your Affairs, and the Counsel of your Minister; but be faithful in employing it, and endeavour so to dispose of your Business, that you may every day pray at the same Hour. If you can do it in the Morning, it is the time of the day that holy Men have judged most proper for Prayer.*

II. *Remove as much as you can from noise, and the sight of Men, when you pray; seek out a solitary place that nothing may hinder you; for it is in silence and retreat that God communicates himself to the Soul, according to that Saying of the Holy Ghost;* I will bring her into the

the Wilderneſs, and ſpeak comfortably unto her.

III. *Before you go to Prayer, conſider firſt on the Subject you are to meditate, and read ſome Book that treats of it. Many prepare themſelves in the Evening againſt next Morning; and it is the advice of ſeveral holy Men to think on it again in the Morning ſo ſoon as one is awake.*

IV. *Begin always your Prayer by the Contemplation of the Preſence of God; proſtrate your ſelf on the Ground before him, and adore him, according to the Example of* Jeſus Chriſt *in the* Garden *of* Olives, *and beg of him Grace to pray aright.*

V. *To curb your Imagination, Form to your ſelf always a ſenſible Image of that you have a mind to meditate, as much as the Subject will admit. If you meditate on a Myſtery, or ſome Action of the Life of our Lord, you may repreſent to your ſelf the place where it paſs'd, and the*

Per-

Persons who were concerned in it. If you meditate on some Passages of Scripture, represent to your self the Person that spake them, as if they were addressed to your self; for all that is written, *saith St.* Paul, is written for our Instruction. *There are few things which you may not so represent to your self under some sensible Figure. The holy Scripture gives us an Instance of it, when it describes Sin under the Figure of a Leprosie, God, under that of the Sun; and when it sets forth to us his infinite Perfection by things created, which are the Images of them, as his Immensity by the Sea, his Love by Fire, and his Wisdom by Light.*

VI. *Reason upon your Subject, until you have drawn from it some light proper to raise in you, either holy Affections towards God, or efficacious Resolutions for the ordering of your Life: As to which, there are two important things to be observed.*

The

The first, That you must not pass from one Affection to another, until the Sentiment of the first begin to languish, and touch your Heart no more. The second, That in the Resolutions you make for the ordering of your Life, it is good to descend to the particulars of your Actions, and there-to apply the holy Maxims which you propose to your self to follow. There are some industrious Souls, who at the end of Prayer, write down the pious Thoughts that they have had in it, and the holy Resolutions they have taken, to the end they may remember them, when Occasion presents for the putting them in practice.

VII. *If God comfort you in your Prayer, and give you a sensible taste of his Truths, it is a gift of his Grace, which you ought thankfully to receive; but be not proud of it, neither rely too much upon it. The Excellence of Prayer consists not in sensible Consolations; oftentimes the Beginners*

have more of them than the Perfect, and there is danger, leſt in ſeeking Conſolation with too much Anxiety, one may loſe him who gives it.

VIII. *If you find a Dejection or Dulneſs of Heart, be not diſcouraged, God hides himſelf ſometimes from the Soul to try it, but he never withdraws from it. When that happens to you, humble your ſelf before God, and conſider your ſelf in his Preſence, as a poor Beggar, who ought to wait with Patience for that which is to be given him, becauſe there is nothing due to him. Be ſometimes urgent with him, as the Spouſe did, to ſhow himſelf unto you, and to let you hear his Voice; tell him that your Soul, in his abſence, is as a depth without light, and as a Land without Water. But above all things, be always in a perfect Submiſſion to his Will: Tell him with the devout Author of the Imitation of Jeſus Chriſt;* Bleſſed be thou,

if

if I be comforted, and bleſſed be thou alſo, if I be deſolate. *For in fine, whether you be joyful, or whether you be afflicted, what matters it, provided God be glorified? Your darkneſs will bleſs him as well as your light. If you ſeek only to pleaſe him, let him work his own Work, he knows better than you what is for his Intereſt and* Glory.

I ſhould here ſay a word or two concerning the following Meditations: *To perſwade the Uſe of them, I might alledge, That they are ſhort, and there needs but very little time to read them; That they are of a plain ſtyle, and proper enough to inſpire the Sentiments that are expreſſed in them. But ſeeing the Goodneſs of ſuch Writings, and the Fruits which they produce, depend on the Succeſs which it pleaſes Divine Providence to give them, I have thought it better to commit this entirely into the Hands of God,*

than to make use of Reasons meerly human, to oblige good Souls to use them, since he who writ these Meditations *propos'd to himself no other end, but the Glory of God; whatever his Providence appoints, he will be content with, because he well knows that God always finds his Glory in the fulfilling of his own Will.*

OF

OF THE END OF MAN,

And the Advantages that are to be had in the Service of GOD.

Meditation I.

God created Man to ſerve him.

I. GOD created me to ſerve him, why don't I do it? It's a trouble to ſubmit to to God, but none at all to ſubmit

to the Devil. I follow the Maxims of the World, though they torment and rack me, and I cannot lay the leaſt conſtraint upon my ſelf for keeping the Commandments of God.

II. God made me only for himſelf, it is unjuſt then for me to divide my ſelf betwixt him and the World. It's no wonder that the World ſometimes admits that Diviſion; it is much that it hath the hate of a thing which does not at all belong to it; but God, to whom I wholly belong, will never ſuffer it; *One cannot ſerve two Maſters.*

III. There's no ſtanding neutral betwixt God and the World: if I be not for God, I am againſt him; if I labour not for him, he will, as he himſelf ſaies, deal with me, as with an unfaithful Servant, who laviſhes away his Goods: I muſt of neceſſity declare my ſelf.

Me-

Meditation II.

The Soul findeth reſt in the Service of God.

I. EVery thing is at reſt, when it is where it ſhould be: When the Fire is in its Sphere, it acts no more, becauſe it is there where Nature would have it to be. When Man is united to God, he is at his Center, and ſo it is natural for him to be in Tranquillity. *Return at length unto thy reſt, O my Soul!* Without Reſt there is no true Happineſs in Life; and without God there is no true Reſt for you.

II. A Heart firmly united to God, is pleas'd with nothing beſides God: He is at the Fountain of all Happineſs, and though at preſent he enjoy him but imperfectly, the Pleaſure he takes in

doing the Will of God, ſtands him in ſtead of a perfect Fruition. How great a fund of Peace does that Heart poſſeſs, which deſireth nothing beyond, and is always content with what it hath?

III. Nothing afflicts a true Servant of God. As it is enough to give him content, that God's Will be done upon him, ſo is he indifferent in what manner it be done; let him be Poor or Rich, in Health or Sickneſs, commended or blamed, all is alike to him; becauſe in All-alike he finds the Will of God. In this State ought I then to be, if I would enjoy perfect Repoſe.

Meditation III.

Worldlings are never at reſt.

I. WHEN I meet with a worldly Man, who tells me,

me, That the life he leads, is a pleasant Life, I have great cause to mistrust him, and believe that he would seduce me. A Life that is not peaceable and quiet, is never pleasant; and God assures me, That there is no peace to the Wicked; he is more to be believed than they.

II. How can there be peace in the Soul of a Worldling? all things are out of order, nothing's there in its proper place; Reason there truckles to Passions, and the Passions themselves jarr amongst themselves; one Desire struggles with another; the Heart many times knows not what side to take: if it satisfie the one, it discontents the other; if it divide it self, it provokes both. O my God, how true is it, that a disturbed Spirit is its own Punishment!

III. There might still be some advantage in that Disorder, if it

could ſilence the ſecret Voice of Conſcience, which troubles the Wicked in their Pleaſures; but do what they can, they muſt hear it, they muſt liſten to its Reproaches and Threatnings. Can, indeed, that Man be capable of Joy, who is obliged to carry about with him in all places his Executioner, and to have always before his Eyes the image of the Puniſhment that is prepared for him?

Meditation IV.

True Liberty is not to be found, but in the Service of God.

I. O How inconſiderate Men are! they ſeek after Liberty, and make themſelves ſtrangers to God. He that is not the Servant of God, has many Maſters; he ſerves the world, which hath

hath its Laws; he ſerves his Self-love that hath its Maxims; he ſerves his Paſſions, which have moſt different inclinations. To be a Servant to a hundred Maſters, ſo as never to pleaſe one, without being puniſhed by all the reſt, is that to be free?

II. But where is that Liberty to be found, which is ſought by eſtranging ones ſelf from God? I can ſee it no where in this World: it is not at Court, nor amongſt great Men; for no where are Men more low, more uneaſie, and more depreſs'd than there: it is not in Offices, nor in the Adminiſtration of Publick Affairs; for nothing laies a greater Conſtraint upon Men; they are reſponſible to all Men for their Actions: it is not in a private Life, that is peſter'd likewiſe with Affairs and Incumbrances. O ye Children of this World! how hard a Bondage is

the Liberty wherewith ye Flatter your ſelves?

III. There is no true Liberty, but the Liberty of the Sons of God. *When Men are united to God, they poſſeſs his Spirit; and where the Spirit of God is, there is always Liberty.* God forms the Will of thoſe that fear him, when it is right, and when it is not, he reforms it by conforming it to his own, without forcing or conſtraining it. What is it to be free, if it be not to do always that which one hath a mind to do?

Meditation V.

God takes a particular Care of thoſe that ſerve him.

I. WE many times complain, that we are overcharged with the Cares of the World: well

well we deſerve it, ſince 'tis our own Fault, we are not delivered from them. Let us give up our ſelves to God, and we ſhall be free; let us ſerve God, and we ſhall want nothing.

II. To Man a Sinner, and to Man diſobedient, it was ſaid, *In the Sweat of thy Brow ſhalt thou eat Bread.* But the contrary hath been ſaid to the Servants of God; *Take no thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all theſe things.*

III. Providence ſo diſpoſes all things for the Servants of God, that every thing goes well with them; their very Infirmities are not unprofitable to them; they make them a ground of Humility and Confuſion, which equally encreaſe their Faith and Zeal. O how pleaſant is it to ſerve a Ma-

ſte

ſter with whom nothing is loſt, and who rewards even the Shame of his Servants, in that they have not been faithful to him!

Meditation VI.

God guides and protects his Servants by a particular Providence.

I. WE are Travellers in this World, through which we take different Roads: What care doth not God take to prevent his Servants from loſing their Way? on that account he buſies his Angels, and employs his Graces; he makes himſelf their Guide by ſecret Inſpirations, he adviſeth them what to do, and what to avoid. *Bleſſed is the Man, O Lord, whom thou vouchſafeſt to teach thy Law.*

II.

II. God protects his Servants. When once I am his, I ſhall fear no more any thing; I ſhall not be afraid of Men, they ſhall not pluck a hair from my Head, for which he will not call them to an account. I will not fear Devils, for they cannot hurt me without his Permiſſion; nay, I ſhall not fear even his deſtroying Angels, whom he ſends to puniſh the Sins of the World; for he ſends always others before them to ſtamp the Mark of his Protection upon the Foreheads of his Servants: *For if God be for us, who can be againſt us?*

III. God deals not ſo with the Wicked. Though he ſuffers the Sun to ſhine upon them, as well as the Juſt, yet he looks not on them with the ſame tender Affection; he has not the like concern for their Conduct and Preſervation; they have forſook him, he forſakes them alſo; they have

bid

bid him *depart from them, for they would not learn the knowledge of his ways*; and therefore it is no wonder, if he permits them to go astray.

Meditation VII.

There is no true Pleasure, nor solid Joy to be found, but in the Service of God.

I. *HOW great are the Pleasures, O Lord, that thou poureſt forth into the Hearts of thoſe that fear thee!* The Men of the World conceive it not; they look upon thy Servants bowed down under thy Yoke, and pity them. If they ſaw how thou thy ſelf helps them to carry it; if they felt that heavenly Unction wherewith thou ſofteneſt what they bear, they would

would envy their Happineſs.

II. Nothing ſhows more the Frailty of the Pleaſures of this World, than the Eagerneſs and Greedineſs wherewith Worldlings hunt after them: if they were true Pleaſures, leſs would ſuffice to content them. I have much more Reaſon to think, that the Pleaſures of Saints are the true Pleaſures; they who have once taſted them, cannot endure others; they diſpenſe with all, they abandon all; and that's a ſign that what they have, contents them.

III. Pleaſure wherewith one may be cloyed, is a counterfeit Pleaſure. What is really Pleaſure, is always ſo; in what Diſpoſition ſoever the Soul be, it is touched with it, and finds its Content therein. Hitherto I am weary of every thing, there is nothing to be found, but Vanity and Vexation. Let us ſeek, my Soul, in fine,

let

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let

let us ſeek for more ſolid Joy; it is not to be had, but in the Houſe of God, and in thoſe Rivers of Gladneſs, which are at his right Hand. My Heart is made for the Pleaſures of Heaven, all the Pleaſures of Earth will never fill it.

Of SIN.

Meditation I.

Sin is the only Evil in this life to be feared.

I. NOthing diverts me from my End, nothing makes me a Stranger to God, but Sin. *I am perſwaded*, ſaid St. *Paul, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth,*

depth, nor any other Creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord. There is nothing but Sin that can do it, and therefore I have nothing to fear but Sin.

II. We know not what Evil is, when we ſay Sickneſs is a great Evil. There is no Evil in Life, but Sin, becauſe nothing but Sin can hinder us from the Fruition of the Sovereign Good.

III. I ſhould not be unhappy in Hell, if I could be there without Sin; and I ſhould not be content in Paradiſe, if I could enter there with Sin. If I were in Hell without Sin, there I might enjoy God, and would be as contented as the Saints in Paradiſe are: if I were in Paradiſe with Sin, I ſhould never there enjoy God, but ſuffer the crueleſt Torments that the damn'd in Hell ſuffer.

Meditation II.

How much God hateth Sin.

I. THere is no ſtronger Antipathy than that betwixt God and Sin: it is eſſential to them, and faſtned to their Nature. If Sin could ceaſe from being contrary to God, it would be no longer Sin; and if God could ceaſe to hate Sin, he would be no longer God. I muſt not then expect to poſſeſs God ſo long as I am poſſeſſed by Sin; as Sin enters not into Heaven, becauſe God reigns there, ſo God enters not into a Soul where Sin reigns.

II. God's great Work in the World, is to deſtroy Sin; all that he does out of himſelf, tends only to that. If he ſend his Son upon Earth, it is to baniſh Sin thence; if he give us his Grace, it is to arm

arm us againſt Sin; if he reward us, it is for having overcome Sin; if he puniſh us, it is for loving Sin. This is a Work! worthy of God, why do not I alſo make it mine? I have ſo many occaſions daily to hinder Sin, why don't I do it? but alas! whilſt God labours to deſtroy Sin, do not I labour to plant it?

III. God puniſhes Sin in whomſoever he finds it: he puniſhed it in Angels, the moſt excellent of his Creatures; he puniſhed it in Men, whom he loved ſo tenderly; he puniſhed it in his own Son, though he had nothing but the imputation of it. Behold, my Soul, behold *Jeſus* upon the Croſs. There is an effect of the Hatred that God hath to Sin. If God dealt ſo with his own Son, becauſe he found him loaded with the Sins of others, how will he deal with a Slave laden with his own Crimes?

Me-

Meditation III.

Sin is a Contempt of God, which cannot be ſufficiently puniſhed.

I. O My God, I tremble when I think on the ſeverity of thy Judgments, and the terrible Puniſhments wherewith thou chaſtiſeſt Sinners: But when I think they are Creatures who have deſpiſed thee, I have nothing to ſay, but, *Juſt art thou, O Lord, and righteous are thy Judgments.*

II. God deſpiſed, God leſs eſteemed than a momentary Pleaſure, than a Concern of nothing! God rejected, God baniſhed from a Heart that hath known him, that hath taſted him, that knows his worth! Can he ſufficiently revenge himſelf of ſo cruel an Injury?

III.

III. Nothing was more insolently done by the *Jews* to the Son of God, than the preferring a Robber before him: but after all, they were blind, they knew him not. The slight I put upon him, when I prefer before him a sensual Pleasure, or a vain Shew of Honour (I who know what he is) ought to be far more sensible unto him.

Meditation IV.

Sin is extream Ingratitude towards God.

GOD thought on me when no body minded me, and when I was not in a Condition to mind my self. He gave me Life and Reason, he created me to enjoy him; by the price of his Blood he

he hath redeemed me from the ſlavery of the Devil. I was crowned with all theſe Bleſſings at my Birth, and I have lived with him from whom I have received them, as with mine Enemy; what ſtrange Ingratitude!

II. Had God done me much Hurt, had he forſaken, abuſed and injured me, could I do more than I do to diſpleaſe him? Could I be more diſobedient to his Commandments? could I more inſolently deſpiſe his Law? could I be more averſe to the Advancement of his Glory? I act againſt God, who hath done unto me nothing but Good; all that the damned can act, to whom he does nothing but Evil.

III. To do evil to God, who hath never done me hurt, is to be very wicked. To do evil to God, who hath done me good, is to be extreamly ungrateful; but

to

to do evil to God, who hath done me good, and to make use of the good he hath done me, to do evil unto him, it is the blackest of all Crimes.

Meditation V.

How much Sin desolates and wastes a Soul, rendring it horrible in the Eyes of God.

I. SIN deprives the Soul of all that is most precious, and renders useless all that it cannot deprive it of. The Scripture compares it to a Tyrant, who plunders and sacks a place he is become Master of. Oh, how many are there who think themselves Rich, and are stript of all! but alas, the Riches of the Soul are reckoned of no value!

II.

II. I am asham'd to appear before Men with a Spot on my Face, and I dare appear before God cover'd all o'er with my Sins, which render me more horrible to his Eyes, than a Leprosie would be to the Eyes of Men. But I am afraid to offend the sight of Men, and fear not to offend the sight of God.

III. Men love neatness in all things, except in the Soul. They are neat in their Clothes, in their Houses, in their Equipage: They adorn all that relates to the Body, which is but of Clay, and will be one day but Corruption; and they neglect the Soul, which is Divine and Immortal. Let us leave, let us leave this Body in filth and corruption, we do it no wrong; but let us take care of the cleanness of our Soul, it participates somewhat of the Nature of God, it cannot be under Sin, but by violence.

Medi-

Meditation VI.

There is no Sin ſmall.

I. SOme ſins are ſaid not to be great. Whatever is Sin, is great, ſince it is ſtill an offence committed againſt God. O infinite Majeſty! how little art thou known, when Men think they may offend thee, and not do a great evil?

II. How ſlight ſoever a Sin may be, it is ſtill a greater evil than all evils together which are not Sin, becauſe all evils which are not ſin, are only evils to Creatures, but Sin is an Evil againſt God. If I could overturn the World, if I could annihilate all Angels and Men, without Sin, I ſhould do a leſs Evil than when I tell a Lye which is a Sin.

III. A Sin which Jeſus Chriſt hath bewailed, and hath coſt him

his Blood; a Sin which God abhors, and he punisheth by fire; a Sin that would eternally debar me from Paradise, if it were not expiated by the sufferings of a Saviour; a Sin which cools God's Love towards me, which stops the supplies of his Graces, and puts me in the way of losing his Friendship; can that be a little Evil?

Meditation VII.

God very often punishes Sin in this Life.

I. GOD delays not always the Execution of his Wrath that he may punish Sinners in Hell. Seeing that they put their Confidence in the Blessings of this Life, making a Renunciation to the Comforts of Heaven, and are per-

perſwaded they may ſetle an happineſs here below, which will laſt at leaſt as long as themſelves. God is concerned in Glory to trouble their Pleaſures, and to let them ſee, that he is Sovereign over all.

II. Theſe Chaſtiſements are very common in the World; they are felt, its true, but Men know not always whence they proceed. When an Accident or Sickneſs happen, Men complain of their bad Fortune; and they ought to bewail their bad Conſcience, which provokes God, and draws down all theſe Evils upon the Head of the Wicked.

III. If ſome great Sinners ſeem to us to be free from ſuch Misfortunes, we muſt not think them the happier for that; theſe are oftentimes Victims, which God is willing to let grow fat, that he may make of them one day a more glorious Sacrifice to his Indignation.

And beſides, we ſee not all: the ſenſible part of the Soul is often the ſecreteſt, but God knows it full well, and commonly ſmites the Sinner there, according to that Saying of Scripture; *the fear of the wicked it ſhall come upon him.*

Of DEATH.

Meditation I.

Death is uncertain, we are to make timely preparation for it.

I. I Know very well I ſhall die, but I know not when; were it to be to morrow, I ought to prepare my ſelf to day; alas! it may be ſooner perhaps; I may die within an hour, I may die the very minute

minute I think on't: if that happened, am I ready?

II. What hinders, but that I instantly prepare for Death? I fear that the thought of it may make me melancholick, I am afraid it will disturb my pleasures; but should I die without thinking on't, is that an Evil to be set light by?

III. When all is done, it is a trouble we must soon or late put our selves to. It is impossible I can die well, unless I prepare for it, and I cannot prepare for it, without thinking thereon: that Thought will disturb my pleasures; a weak Reason to take me off of it: if it did not disquiet them, if it did not wean me from them, what good would it do to me?

Meditation II.

Death is a Master of great concern, it requires a great deal of care to make it happy.

I. THE most important act of Life, is to die: How do I prepare my self for it? it is a Business that concerns my Soul, my Salvation, the loss of Paradise, and Damnation to Hell fire. Do I take all the care that so great Concerns require?

II. What care soever I take to prepare my self for Death, it is still an Affair wherein I cannot promise my self infallible Success. What measures soever may be taken, one is still in danger of miscarrying: many have failed in it through too much Confidence that they had sufficiently laboured for a good Issue. What ought not I

to

to fear, I, who wholly ſlight it?

III. There are Affairs that may be avoided, if one will take the Pains; there are others that may be taken up; and by demanding leſs than one may pretend to, there is no danger of loſing all. The Affair of Death is not of that Nature; it's inevitable; die we muſt; it admits of no Capitulation; we muſt run the whole risk: betwixt dying well and ill there is no *Medium*.

Meditation III.

Death deſtroys human Grandeur and Pleaſures.

I. A Shroud, a Coffin, a Grave of five or ſix foot of Earth, puts an end to all the Pride and Grandeur of mortal Men. *O Earth, O Duſt, what haſt thou to brag of!*

II. In the Grave I ſhall be no more but a little Duſt; out of the Grave what will remain of me upon earth? a Name that ſometimes may be remembred, by chance, for my reproach? O Vanity!

III. To be damned for getting an Eſtate which one may never enjoy, what Folly is it? To pamper Fleſh which Worms ſhall devour, deliciouſly to feed a Body that is ſuddenly to be reduced into Aſhes, what Employment is that of Man's Life?

Meditation IV.

We are to do during our Life, what at our Death we may wiſh we had done.

I. ONE never judges better than at Death, and one is never

never leſs capable than then to act. Men judge well, becauſe they ſee things thoroughly and in themſelves, but they never act worſe; becauſe then the Soul is troubled, and in agitation. It is a great ſecret to judge of things during Life, as one would judge of them at Death; and to do them as one will wiſh he had done them.

II. Were I upon the brink of Death, how would I wiſh I had lived? There is no Action of Piety which I would not willingly have practiſed; no Life ſo auſtere, that I would not wiſh I had embraced. Have not I at preſent the ſame reaſons for living well, that at that time I may have to wiſh I had lived well?

III. It never entred into the Thoughts of any dying Man to regret his not having been enough engaged in the World, and his

not having lived deliciously enough. Men lament the time they have lost in the vain Divertisements of the Age, and their too much love for Pleasures: Alas! all my Life is nothing else, but what Men bewail at their Death.

Meditation V.

Life is frail, and of short continuance; we are not to build our hopes on it.

I. SOUL, said the Rich Man in the Gospel, *thou hast much Goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* Inconsiderate Man! is it enough to have Goods for many years, if one have not many years to enjoy his Goods?

II.

II. Nothing is more frail, nor less to be relied upon, than Life. A thousand Accidents may put a stop to the Course of it; a Fever, an Inflammation of the Lungs, an unlucky Blow, is enough to dispatch a Man. Health, Constitution and Youth, resist not always Death; Men of all Ages die, and sometimes when they think themselves best in health; and yet shall I dare to build my hopes upon Life?

III. Could I live as long as it were possible for me by the ordinary Course of Nature, could I be assured of fifty years more of Life, is that comparable to Eternity? *Adam* lived nine hundred and thirty years, and died: *Noah* lived nine hundred and fifty years, and he is dead: Perhaps I have still twenty or thirty years to live; and I live as if I were never to die.

Me-

Meditation VI.

Men die but once, therefore it is of extreme Importance to die well.

I. IF a Man were to die twice, it would be leſs imprudent to run the risk of dying ill once; he might make Reparation for his Fault; he might be well at his own coſt; he might at the ſame time repent his bad Life and bad Death: But alas! when one is once dead, there is no returning again to Life; one muſt continue there where he is; *where the tree falls, there it ſhall lie.*

II. If by an unlucky Chance my Goods are deſtroyed, I can purchaſe more; if a malicious perſon ruine my Fortune, a good Friend may reſtore it; but if a bad Death make me loſe my Soul, how is that

that Loſs to be made up again?

III. A moment followed by Eternity, a moment on which depends Eternity, a moment that is to determine my Bliſs or Miſery to all Eternity, deſerves it not well to be thought on as long as I live? O terrible moment, how can one forget thee!

Meditation VII.

Death is ſweet to good Men, but terrible to Sinners.

I. IT's as natural for a good Life to be followed by a good Death, and for a diſorderly Life to have a diſmal End, as it is for a good Tree to bring forth good Fruit, and a bad Tree bad Fruit. If ſometimes it happen that a great Sinner dies well, it is a kind of Miracle, on which Sinners ought

to

to lay no greater ſtreſs for their Salvation, than Men that are deſperately ſick, ought upon miraculous Cures for the Recovery of their Healths.

II. Die we muſt: O terrible Word to a Man who hath never thought of Death! what trouble and diſorders are wrought in the Soul of a Sinner by the confuſed Apprehenſions that it raiſeth? for then are all the Faculties employed to conceive the meaning of it. We muſt die, that's to ſay, we muſt leave Goods, Houſe, Offices, Friends; we muſt for ever bid Adieu to all the Pleaſures of Life; we muſt appear before God to give an Account of our Actions, and to be judged by him. How many things to forſake? how many things to bewail? how many things to do? how many things to fear? and for all theſe Men have but a moment. Oh, how diſmal then

then is the Death of a Sinner!

III. *The Souls of the Juſt are in the Hands of God; Death afflicts them not.* When one is not wedded to Life, he parts from it without regret; and when one conſiders that he only dies to live for ever, he dies with pleaſure; he fears not to fall into the Hands of God, when he loves him; becauſe when we love him, we are ſure to be beloved of him. *Let my Soul die the Death of the righteous.*

Of the laſt Judgment.

Meditation I.

God is to be our Judge, it concerns us much to be in his favour.

I. WHEN a Man hath a Law Sute, what does he not do to gain his Judges? He gets

gets all his Friends to ſollicite them; he waits on them early in the Morning, he omits no Submiſſions towards them, and renders them all ſorts of Civilities. My Salvation is in the Hands of God, he is to be Judge of it: what do I do to render him favourable to me?

II. A Man would be counted a Fool to ſlight a Judge before whom he is to have a Tryal concerning his whole Eſtate. The Tryal that I have before God is of otherguiſe importance, it concerns my eternal happineſs or miſery, and I affront him!

III. If after God had condemned me, I could ſtill appeal to another; if I could get the Sentence pronounced againſt me, reverſed by a ſuperiour Tribunal, I were leſs to be blamed: But if God declares againſt me, who dares to declare for me? if God condemns me, who

who can have right to abſolve me?

Meditation II.

The day of Judgment, is the day of Gods Wrath.

I. GOD does all things, in a manner, ſuitable to his Greatneſs; he loves like God, he rewards like God, but he puniſhes alſo like God; he pours forth his Wrath upon Sinners, as it becometh the Dignity of God. O my Soul, conceive aright what an angry God is, a God provoked againſt his Creatures, a God reſolved to be revenged on men! *who can think on the day of his coming, and who dares appear in his ſight?*

II. Where ſhall I hide my ſelf, O Lord, from thine Eyes in the Day

Day of thy fiery indignation? The Creatures which never diſobeyed thee ſhall tremble; the Sun that keeps ſo conſtantly the Courſe thou haſt appointed him from the Beginning of the World, ſhall be darkned, the Stars ſo obedient to thy Voice, ſhall fall from Heaven, the Sea that hath with ſo much reſpect kept within the Bounds thou haſt ſet to it, ſhall quake; ſhall I then be ſecure, I, who have offended thee, and ſo inſolently deſpiſed thy Law?

III. The more patient thou art, O my God, the more thou conniveſt at the Sins of Men, to give them time for Repentance; but I conceive thou wilt be the more terrible when thou haſt a mind to puniſh them. Men deſpiſe thy Goodneſs, and abuſe thy Mercies, and thou art ſilent. O how loud will thy Voice be heard, when thy Patience tired out by our Crimes,

Crimes, will no longer hinder thy Wrath from breaking out upon us!

Meditation III.

The Day of Judgment, is the Day of Vengeance.

I. GOD at preſent makes uſe of Sinners for purifying the Vertue of Saints; but at the Day of Judgment he will make uſe of Saints for puniſhing the Crimes of Sinners. God is a good Father, he chaſtiſes his Children that they may amend, but he caſts into the Fire the Rod which he uſes for correcting them.

II. When I ſhall ſee God avenging himſelf on his Enemies, when I ſhall ſee the Saints trampling under foot the ungodly, as Dirt and Aſhes; when I ſhall ſee all the Creatures armed againſt

gainſt the wicked, who have made them the inſtruments of their Sins; then may I alſo be avenged on thoſe that perſecuted me: That's the time God hath appointed for Revenge; we muſt not anticipate it.

III. I do my ſelf an injury when I revenge my ſelf in this Life upon thoſe that do me evil: I can revenge my ſelf but weakly, and with little Glory; nor is it always ſecurely done neither; and it often happens, that by ſeeking a Revenge, one meets with a new injury. Let us wait till God put the Sword into our Hands, to execute his Wrath upon the Nations; till he make us the Judges of his and our Enemies; it is my own fault if I be not. He hath promiſed to thoſe who ſhall forſake all and follow him, that they ſhall be of that number.

Me-

Meditation IV.

The juſt men and Sinners ſhall appear before God with diffe-rent Thoughts.

I. WHEN the ſound of the Trumpet ſhall be heard, which ſhall ſummon the Dead to appear before the Tribunal of God, ſome ſhall haſten out of their Graves to go and meet their Redeemer in the Clouds; others ſhall call to Hills and Mountains to fall upon them to cover them from the ſight of their Judge: of which of the two ſhall I be?

II. Shall I never ſee *Jeſus*, but to fear and hate him? ſhall I never ſee him in his Glory, but to be afflicted at his Advantages? O my only hope in the Day of Tribulation, become not to me an Object of Terror!

III.

III. In what poſture ſhall the great Men of the World be, who are ſo jealous of their place, in that general Aſſembly of all Men and Angels? they'll be treated like Slaves, without Diſtinction, without Honour, without Conſideration; and they ſhall have the Sorrow to ſee thoſe whom they have deſpiſed, above them. *Behold*, ſhall they then ſay in ſurprize and deſpair, *behold thoſe whom we have mocked, Fools that we are; we thought that their Life was folly, and behold, they are of the number of the Children of God!*

Meditation V.

At the Day of Judgment God will justifie the Conduct of his Servants, and of his secret Judgments.

I. THE Precipitation of my Judgments makes me commit great injustice against my Neighbour; I condemn Actions which are most laudable, because I only judge of them by outward Appearance: God who sees the inside, judges quite otherwise, and he will one day make appear to all the World, the Judgment he makes of them to my Confusion. O my Soul, let us not judge before the time!

II. Have I never committed that injustice but against Men? have I not even past my rash Judg-

Judgments upon the Conduct of God himſelf? Have not I made thoſe inconſiderate Reflections, which the falſe Wits of the World ſometimes make? how can that be? how does that agree with Providence? how ſhall I be aſhamed, when God ſhall make known to all Men and Angels the weakneſs of my Reaſonings concerning his ſecret Counſels?

III. With what Confidence dare I examine the Conduct of God, I, who am ſo ignorant about mine own? How can I condemn my Neighbour for doubtful Actions, I, who daily excuſe in my ſelf ſo many real Failings? if I be blind, if I be unjuſt, God is not ſo, my Judgments will not preposſeſs him, neither in favour to my ſelf, nor to the Prejudice of others: *He will render to every one according to their Works.*

Medi-

Meditation VI.

Of the opening of Conſciences.

I. I Have no ſo intimate a Friend, to whom I would diſcover all my ſecret Failings, and I many times diſguiſe them to my ſelf; what Confuſion will it be for me, when God ſhall publiſh them in the preſence of all Men!

II. I am only aſhamed of Men in this Life; provided I can hide my Sins from them, I care not though God ſee them: it will not be ſo at the Day of Judgment, nothing will trouble me more than to ſee the Eyes of my God fixt upon me: if we would avoid that Confuſion, we muſt blot them out in this Life.

III. How many Men that only judge of me by what they ſee, will be ſurprized when they ſhall read

in my Conſcience ſo many ſhameful Sins which I have committed, ſo many brutal Paſſions to which I have given way? there perhaps I my ſelf may be miſtaken. I flatter my ſelf, I make nothing of Actions, which, perhaps, are great Sins in the ſight of God: and I account ſome things Vertues, which God will charge upon me as Crimes.

Meditation VII.

Of the Sentence of the Judge.

I. HOW different wilt thou be from thy ſelf, O Lord, in the Day of thy Fury! At preſent there is nothing more eaſie to be appeaſed than thou art; a Sigh, a Tear, a Look, diſarms thine Anger, and then thou wilt be inflexible

ble at the Cries of an infinite number of Wretches, againſt whom thou wilt, without Pity, pronounce that ſo terrible Sentence; *Go ye curſed into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

II. When I perceive that God is provoked againſt me, I preſent to him the Death of *Jeſus*; I fly to his Wounds, and there find a ſafe Sanctuary from the Evils wherewith he threatens me; but at the Day of Judgment it will be *Jeſus* himſelf who ſhall pronounce the Sentence of my Condemnation: No body will interceed for me, I muſt undergo a Judgment without mercy.

III. To ſee good Men honoured with the glorious Name of the Children of God, and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, whilſt the Wicked are called accurſed, and

condemned to eternal Flames; to ſee them to mount up to Heaven, to reign there with God, whilſt the others are caſt headlong into Hell, there to burn eternally with Devils. *That, that, my Soul, is the Deſtiny of Sinners, and the end of Impiety.*

Of Paradiſe and Hell.

Meditation I.

What Paradiſe is.

I. PAradiſe may be attained to, but not comprehended: *Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard, neither hath it entred into the mind of Man to conceive the good things that God hath prepared for thoſe*

those that love him: and nevertheleſs I put my ſelf daily in danger of loſing it.

II. I fancy that I could make my life very pleaſant, if God would give me power to make it ſo as I could imagine, and nevertheleſs I could do nothing that can come near the Life which the Saints lead in Paradiſe. God hath done more for me than could have come into my Thoughts to deſire.

III. Could I ever have imagined to my ſelf a lovelier Habitation than Heaven, ſweeter Company than that of Angels, a larger Poſſeſſion, and more capable to content all my Deſires, than the Poſſeſſion of God? *Bleſſed is the Nation whoſe God is the Lord; and the People whom he hath choſen for his own Inheritance.*

Meditation II.

The ſight of God maketh the Happineſs of the Saints in Paradiſe.

I. WE are now the Children of God, but when he manifeſts himſelf to us in his Glory, we ſhall be altogether like unto him; we ſhall participate of his Brightneſs, of his Knowledge and Immortality. *I ſaid ye are Gods, and all of you the Sons of the moſt High.*

II. *I ſhall be filled, O Lord, when I ſhall ſee thee in thy Glory*; I ſhall have no more Diſquiet nor Deſires, becauſe I ſhall ſtand no more in need of any thing; I ſhall find all Bleſſings in thee alone, and I ſhall fully enjoy thee; *I ſhall be ſatisfied*

in

in the abundance of thy Houſe, and quench my Thirſt in thoſe Rivers of Pleaſure which thou ſhedeſt abroad in the Hearts of thy Choſen.

III. There is no good in this Life, but what is mingled with ſome Evil. Honors perplex, Riches diſquiet, and Pleaſures ruine Health. To find Bleſſings in their Purity, we muſt go to Heaven; there one is a King without Charges, one is Rich without Affairs, one taſtes Pleaſures without ſurfeiting, and without any Fear of loſing them. *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts! my Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord: my Heart and my Fleſh crieth out for the living God.*

Meditation III.

The Thoughts of a Soul which desires to go to Paradise to see our Lord.

I. O *That I had wings like a Dove, to fly to Jesus, to retreat into his Wounds, and there to be at rest!* O *Jesus*, shall I never see thee but under a veil? wilt thou never openly shew me that Face, the sight whereof maketh the Happiness of the Saints?

II. Paradise is not Paradise, but but because there we see, and perfectly love *Jesus*. The most solitary Desart would be a Paradise to me, if I could there find *Jesus*: *For whom have I in Heaven, but thee? and what do I desire upon Earth in comparison of thee?* Thou art

art my Light, my Life, my Joy, my Love, my God, and my All.

III. The Hopes of seeing *Jesus* one day, makes me live, and yet I am impatient to die. *Wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of Death?* So long as I am here, I shall not see *Jesus*, I shall not enjoy *Jesus*, I shall not perfectly love *Jesus*, I shall always be in danger of offending *Jesus*, and of losing him. *Pluck my Soul, O Lord, out of this Prison, that it may praise thy holy Name in* Sion.

Meditation IV.

What Hell is.

I. A Narrow dark Prison in the Center of the World, always burning like a fiery Fur-

nace, but with a Fire without Light: This, my Soul, is that which is called Hell; canſt thou reſolve to abide there for ever?

II. To burn, to burn without dying, to burn without Relief, and without Hopes of ever ſeeing an end of the Puniſhment, is but the leaſt part of the Torments wherewith God puniſhes Sinners in Hell. O living God, how terrible is it to fall into thy Hands!

III. To live with Devils amongſt the damned and deſperate; what kind of Society? there is no other in Hell. To weep, groan, and always to wail; what kind of Exerciſe? that is the eternal Employment of Hell; *for there ſhall be nothing but weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

Meditation V.

Of what Nature are the Evils which are ſuffered in Hell.

I. GOD never pours forth all his Wrath upon Sinners in this Life: His greateſt Fury falls upon them but by Drops, as it is ſaid in Scripture, and they are never alike miſerable in all things; but in Hell it falls upon them like a Torrent which overwhelms them with all ſorts of Evils, and leaves no part of their Body or Soul free from ſome particular Plague: *He will whet his Sword, and ſharp his Arrows againſt them.*

II. There are no entire Sufferings in this Life: when we are ſick, we find Remedies that eaſe

eaſe us; when we are in Affliction, our Friends comfort us; the moſt violent Evils have ſome intervals and intermiſſions, only in Hell, Pain has no abatement. The rich Glutton, ſince he is there, has never been able to procure a drop of Water to qualifie the heat of the Flames wherein he burns.

III. Time inſenſibly wears out the Thoughts which afflict the Soul: Habit dulls the Senſe of Pain in the Body, and there is no Evil neither in Body nor Soul, which is not rendred ſupportable by the hopes of ſeeing an end of it. In Hell there is none of theſe conſolations, there the mind is always taken up with the ſad and cruel Thoughts of Reprobation; the effects of it are at all times equally felt; the Reprobate never want cauſe to upbraid themſelves, that they might have been ſaved, and

that it is their own Fault that they are damned; and they know very well, that what they ſuffer, is to endure for ever. *The Worm that gnaws them ſhall not die, nor the Fire that burns them be quenched.*

Meditation VI.

Of the Privation of God.

I. THE damned ſhall never ſee thee, O Lord, they ſhall never enjoy thee. O how true is it, that Hell is a ſtate of Death; becauſe there thou who art life, art not enjoyed! O how true is it, that it is a place of everlaſting Horrour! ſince there thou never appeareſt, thou who art the Son of Righteouſneſs! O *Jeſus*,

ſus, my Life and my Light, ſuffer me not for ever to be ſeparated from thee!

II. Yet, Lord, if one loved thee there; if one praiſed thy holy Name there; if what one ſuffers there, were acceptable unto thee; if thou tookeſt pity on it, ſomething might be ſaid: But alas! the damned will there hate thee to eternity, blaſpheme thee eternally, have thee eternally for an Enemy, and be eternally thine. How terrible would that Pain appear to thee, O my Soul, if thou didſt love God well?

III. Men are not miſerable ſo long as they ſuffer with Submiſſion to thy Will, O my God. The Martyrs have demonſtrated to us, That an Heart that loveth thee, may retain Peace and Joy upon the Rack, and in the Flames. But in Hell, where the damned love thee not; in Hell, where

where they look upon thee as an Enemy, what eaſe can they expect to their Pains? Thus is it with them, O my Soul, *who forſake the living God.*

Meditation VII.

It is extream Folly to believe that there is a Paradiſe and a Hell, and to live as if there were none.

I. THere is a Paradiſe and a Hell, I believe it, and I cannot doubt of it, without a voluntary Blindneſs. But if I believed nothing of it, were I convinced, that all that I am told concerning it, were but Fables, could I think of it ſeldomer than I do? could I commit more Sins? could I do fewer

fewer good Works? Though I had ſome ground to doubt of it, yet it would be the height of imprudence in me to expoſe my ſelf, by ſo doubting, to the loſs of the greateſt of Bleſſings, and to the incurring the greateſt of Evils, for the Enjoyment of a Life whoſe Pleaſures laſt ſo ſhort a while.

II. I find what deceives me; I flatter my ſelf, that it will be eaſie for me, when I would, to leave the broad way of Hell, and follow that of Paradiſe. I promiſe to my ſelf, that one day I ſhall repent, but how do I know that I ſhall have time? ſhall not my Life end before I would have it? God hath numbred my Days; who knows but the firſt Hour I ſhall ſpend in Sin, may be the laſt of my Life? ſhall I be the firſt that hath been ſurprized? ſo many people both younger, and more

more healthful than I, have been ſnatch'd away by ſudden Death; I may die as they have done. *Jeſus Chriſt* hath ſaid, *that he will come as a Theif in the Night, when he is not expected.* I never mind that leſs than when I ſin. I ought then to be afraid, leſt he ſurprize me in the very act of Sin.

III. If to day I will not abſtain from Sin becauſe I find pleaſure in it, would I be willing to abſtain from it ten years hence? will Sin be then without Pleaſure? or ſhall I have leſs Senſe of Pleaſure than now I have? Experience hath ſufficiently taught me already, That the Enjoyment of Pleaſures rather kindles than extinguiſhes the deſire of them. As there are Pleaſures for all Palats, ſo there are for all Ages; Men improve them daily, and daily invent new ones. If I have a mind to ſin at preſent

ſent, that I may taſte the Pleaſures in vogue, I will have the ſame mind ten years hence, that I may taſte thoſe that will then be in faſhion. When we look upon our Converſion in the future, nothing appears ſo eaſie to be done, becauſe we conſider it as ſtript of all that may render it difficult: but when that future is become preſent, we well perceive, that we have been deceived, we find violent and extravagant Paſſions to be ſubdued, long Habits that are to be deſtroyed; we ſtand in need of extraordinary Grace to ſucceed in that; and extraordinary Grace is not ſo eaſily given. God leaves off to call, when Men refuſe to hear: if then he lets us to day hear his Voice, let us not harden our Hearts; he hath too long invited us to follow him. Seeing we conceive there is a neceſſi-

ceſſity of doing it, to what end ſhould we delay? perhaps it will be too late To morrow; let us therefore begin To day: *dixi, nunc cæpi.*

The End.

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ERRATA.

PAge 6. lin. 16. for *worldly part*, read, part of the world. p. 12. l. 5. after us put ? l. 6. dele II. p. 25. l. 22. for *price* r. Prince. p. 40. l. 5. for *Creator* r. Creditor. p. 61. l. 7. r. *Cast your self.* p. 100. l. 13. for *hate* r. half. p. 126. l. 2. for *master* r. matter. p. 140. l. 21. after *not*, insert, *one of them.*